In the Name of Allah,
the All-beneficent, the All-merciful

قَالَ تَعَالَى:

﴿إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ ٱللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنكُمُ ٱلرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ ٱلْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيرًا﴾

Indeed, Allah desires to repel all impurity from you, O People of the Household, and purify you with a thorough purification. (*Sūrah al-Aḥzāb 33:33*)

The most authoritative books on Ḥadīth and Tafsīr (Qur'ānic exegesis), amongst both Sunnī and Shī`ah sources, cite Prophetic traditions that confirm verse 33:33 as being exclusively revealed in relation to the five who were 'covered by the Cloak'; namely Muḥammad, `Alī, Fāṭimah, al-Ḥasan, and al-Ḥusayn, (peace be upon them), to whom the term 'Ahl al-Bayt' (People of the House) is specifically attributed.

For instance, refer to the following reference books:

(1) Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (d. 241 AH), *al-Musnad*, 1:331; 4:107; 6:292, 304. (2) *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (d. 261 AH), 7:130. (3) Al-Tirmidhī (d. 279 AH), *Sunan*, 5:361 et al. (4) Al-Dūlābī (d. 310 AH), *al-Dhurriyyah al-Ṭāhirah al-Nabawiyyah*, p. 108. (5) Al-Nassa'ī (d. 303 AH), *al-Sunan al-Kubrā* 5:108, 113. (6) al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī (d. 405 AH), *al-Mustadrak `alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* 2:416, 3:133, 146, 147. (7) al-Zarkashī (d. 794 AH), *al-Burhān*, pp. 197. (8) Ibn Ḥajar al-`Asqalānī (d. 852), *Fatḥ al-Barī Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 7:104. (9) Al-Kulaynī (d. 328 AH), *Uṣūl al-Kāfi*, 1:287. (10) Ibn Bābawayh (d. 329 AH), *al-Imāmah wa'l-Tabṣirah*, pp. 47, H. 29. (11) Al-Maghribī (d. 363 AH) *Da`ā'im al-Islām*, pp. 35, 37. (12) Al-Ṣadūq (d. 381 AH) *al-Khiṣāl*, pp. 403, 550. (13) Al-Ṭūsī (d. 460 AH) *al-Amālī*, H. 438, 482, 783.

For more details, refer to the exegesis of the holy verse involved in the following reference books of *tafsīr*: (1) Al-Ṭabarī (d. 310 AH), *Book of Tafsīr*. (2) Al-Jaṣṣāṣ (d. 370 AH), *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān*. (3) Al-Wāḥidī (d. 468 AH), *Asbāb an-Nuzūl*. (4) Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 597 AH), *Zād al-Masīr*. (5) Al-Qurṭubī (d. 671 AH), *al-Jāmī` li-Aḥkām al-Qur'ān*. (6) Ibn Kathīr (d. 774 AH), *Book of Tafsīr*. (7) Al-Tha`labī (d. 825 AH), *Book of Tafsīr*. (8) Al-Suyūṭī (d. 911 AH), *al-Durr al-Manthūr*. (9) Al-Shawkānī (d. 1250 AH), *Fatḥ al-Qadīr*. (10) Al-`Ayyāshī (d. 320 AH), *Book of Tafsīr*. (11) Al-Qummī (d. 329 AH), *Book of Tafsīr*. (12) Furāṭ al-Kūfī (d. 352 AH), *Book of Tafsīr*; in the margin of the exegesis of verse 4:59. (13) Al-Ṭabrisī (d. 560 AH), *Majma` al-Bayān*.

Islam, the Luminous Way of Life

قَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ ﷺ:

إِنِّي تَارِكٌ فِيكُمُ الثَّقَلَيْنِ: كِتَابَ اللهِ وَعِتْرَتِي أَهْلَ بَيْتِي، مَا إِنْ تَمَسَّكْتُمْ بِهِمَا لَنْ تَضِلُّوا بَعْدِي أَبَداً، وَإِنَّهُمَا لَنْ يَفْتَرِقَا حَتَّى يَرِدَا عَلَيَّ الْحَوْضَ.

The Messenger of Allah (ṣ) said:

"Verily, I am leaving among you two precious things [*thaqalayn*]: The Book of Allah and my progeny [*'itrah*], the members of my Household [*Ahl al-Bayt*]. If you hold fast to them, you shall never go astray. These two will never separate from each other until they meet me at the Pond [*ḥawḍ*] (of *Kawthar*)."

This holy tradition has been narrated, with different paraphrases, by numerous Sunnī and Shī`ah sources:
Al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, *Al-Mustadrak `alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* (Beirut), vol. 3, pp. 109-110, 148, 533.
Muslim, *al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, (English translation), book 31, *ḥadīths* 5920-3.
Al-Tirmidhī, *al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 5, pp. 621-2, *ḥadīths* 3786, 3788; vol. 2, p. 219.
Al-Nassā'ī, *Khaṣā'iṣ 'Alī ibn Abī-Ṭālib*, *ḥadīth* 79.
Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *al-Musnad*, vol. 3, pp. 14, 17, 26; vol. 3, pp. 26, 59; vol. 4, p. 371; vol. 5, pp. 181-182, 189-190.
Ibn al-Athīr, *Jāmi` al-Uṣūl*, vol. 1, p. 277.
Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāyah wa'l-Nihāyah*, vol. 5, p. 209.
Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-`Aẓīm* , vol. 6, p. 199.
Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albanī, *Silsilat al-Aḥādīth al-Ṣaḥīḥah* (Kuwait: Al-Dār al-Salafiyyah), vol. 4, pp. 355-8.

Islam, the Luminous Way of Life

Baqir Shareef Al-Qarashi

Translated by:
Abuzar Ahmadi and Ismail Abdullah

The Ahl al-Bayt ('a) World Assembly

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Dedication:

This book is dedicated to those who endeavor to disseminate the Islamic fundamentals. Likewise I dedicate this effort to those who have discussed the original fundamentals of Islam that accompany human life in its entirety, with the hope that it will be beneficial and fruitful for them.

The Author

PREFACE

The invaluable legacy of the Household [*Ahl al-Bayt*] of the Prophet (may peace be upon them all), as preserved by their followers, is a comprehensive school of thought that embraces all branches of Islamic knowledge. This school has produced many brilliant scholars who have drawn inspiration from this rich and pure resource. It has provided the Muslim *ummah* with many scholars whom, following in the footsteps of Imams of the Prophet's Household (*'a*), have done their best to clear up the doubts raised by various creeds and currents within and without Muslim society and to answer their questions. Throughout the past centuries, they have given well-reasoned answers and clarifications concerning these questions and doubts.

To meet the responsibilities assigned to it, the Ahl al-Bayt World Assembly (ABWA) has embarked on a defense of the sanctity of the Islamic message and its verities, often obscured by the partisans of various sects and creeds as well as by currents hostile to Islam. The Assembly follows in the footsteps of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*'a*) and the disciples of their school of thought in its readiness to confront these challenges and tries to be on the frontline in consonance with the demands of every age.

The arguments contained in the works of the scholars belonging to the School of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*'a*) are of unique significance. That is because they are based on genuine scholarship and

appeal to reason, and avoid prejudice and bias. These arguments address scholars and thinkers in a manner that appeals to healthy minds and wholesome human nature.

To assist the seekers of truth, the Ahl al-Bayt World Assembly has endeavored to present a new phase of these arguments contained in the studies and translations of the works of contemporary Shī'ah writers and those who have embraced this sublime school of thought through divine blessing.

The Assembly is also engaged in editing and publishing valuable works by leading Shī'ah scholars of earlier ages to assist the seekers of the truth in discovering the truths which the School of the Prophet's Household (*'a*) has offered to the entire world.

The Ahl al-Bayt World Assembly looks forward to benefit from the opinions of the readers and their suggestions and constructive criticism in this area.

We also invite scholars, translators and other institutions to assist us in propagating the genuine Islamic teachings as preached by the Prophet Muḥammad (ṣ).

We beseech God, the Most High, to accept our humble efforts and to enable us to enhance them under the auspices of Imam al-Mahdī, His vicegerent on the earth (may Allah expedite his advent).

We express our gratitude to Mr Baqir Shareef Al-Qarashi author of the present book, and Mr. Abuzar Ahmadi with the cooperation of Ismail Abdullah, its translators. We also thank our colleagues who have participated in producing this work, especially the staff of the Translation Office.

Cultural Affairs Department

The Ahl al-Bayt ('a) World Assembly

PREFACE OF THE IMAM AL-ḤASAN PUBLIC LIBRARY

–1–

It is unfair to state that the Islamic message only focuses on religious rituals such as prayer, fasting, prescribed tax [*zakāt*], and pilgrimage [*ḥajj*] and that it does not address issues regarding thought and behavior or that it has not shown any concern about governmental systems, administration, or economical and political affairs. Indeed this is a na"ve statement as Islam has comprehensively discussed every issue concerning humanity including spiritual and social matters. Islam has never ignored any aspect of humanity; rather, it has identified the ideal state for everything –as reported in Narrations– something that no one denies except the unreasonable and the ignorant. This Islamic research attempts to elucidate this fact using textual evidence.

–2–

Islam is a gift and blessing from Almighty God to his servants, it conforms to humanity's needs, and guides them on the stable path. Islam frees humankind from thralldom and creates a noble atmosphere for us in the world in order to develop our minds, improve our behaviors, and lead us to the straight and true path.

At the early stages Muslims conquered many nations and freed them from servitude. They built up Islamic principles aiming at progress, innovation, security, peace, and dissemination of

knowledge and they fought against ignorance, deprivation and poverty. They also formed Islamic unity between those nations and peoples despite the difference in their nationalities and languages which consequently led to the abolishment of discrimination and put an end to iniquitous customs and traditions that promote backwardness. They live under the banner of Islam and drink from its pure waters consequently basing their lives on Islamic values and fundamentals. Thus, after horror and suffering there came security and after poverty and deprivation there came wealth. Under the Islamic system and its trainings, they truly achieved the exalted life they desired.

–3–

Islam has a deep and inclusive perspective regarding humankind which has been accorded much hospitality and honor in addition to myriad sublime benefactions. Islam considers humans as God's vicegerents on the earth. Humanity is a pennant towards which all creations flock, beings prominent among all other creatures of God. Indeed God has granted amazing mental powers and aptitudes to humans and has made us superior to all other creatures. He has made human beings His own representative on the earth and the master of the all creatures. Indeed, Allah has enabled human beings to discover the universe, traverse the world, extract the treasures of the earth, and conceptualize every aspect of the world in which we live.

God wants humans, to whom He has granted all these capabilities, to be the source of goodness and benefaction to their brothers and sisters in humanity and aid them in all affairs. However, these intellectual gifts have turned into sources of animosity and suffering for all humankind through the invention of weapons of mass destruction that can obliterate all signs of life on the world.

–4–

In the development of governmental, managerial, and social systems, humans have never, under any circumstances, been successful in creating a system in which happiness is guaranteed and where peace, security and stability are provided. Human beings have not only failed to create such a system but have even contributed to the contrary especially in western societies where there is a lot of violence and unrest and where familial relations have disappeared. In families, fathers have little to do with their children and brothers keep away from their brothers to the extent that those advanced in years have to buy a dog to serve as their friend. What is more interesting to know is that there are special graveyards for dogs. What is more ruinous for human beings than for them to become intimate friends with animals in the place of other human beings?!

–5–

Praise be to Almighty Allah for Islam which has established an enlightening system where there is so much originality and innovation and which has addressed all matters related to humanity in a methodological manner. Its teachings have penetrated into the minds and hearts of people. It stands as a barrier against all the evil instincts that plunge human life into a total darkness with no hope of light.

One method Islam uses to correct souls is to prohibit human beings from acting in an arrogant manner, having envy which causes much harm, endeavoring to hurt other people, oppression in every aspect, deceit, and other evil acts that serve as barriers against progress and prosperity.

–6–

The mission of Islam for the reformation of all aspects of human life is not restricted to a singular comprehensive method. Islam has developed lofty life plans entailing human happiness and immunity from crises. Among these plans and procedures is

the implementation of a preventive public health system. Accordingly, Islam forbids humans from excess in eating and drinking as well as in other necessities of life.

God Almighty has declared:

وكُلُواْ وَاشْرَبُواْ وَلاَ تُسْرِفُواْ إِنَّهُ لاَ يُحِبُّ الْمُسْرِفِينَ

...and eat and drink, but do not waste; indeed He does not like the wasteful.[1]

It must be pointed out that medical research has proven that many diseases such as hardening of the arteries (i.e. atherosclerosis), high blood pressure, and diabetes are caused by excess in eating. We will discuss these issues and other related issues in later chapters.

–7–

The modern human is afflicted with moral and behavioral crises. The perspective of the modern human towards life is materialistic in nature. To this end humans cheat, practice usury, wrong others, and commit other crimes that ultimately lead to their own destruction. Truly, there is loss of spiritual values especially in politics and government administration. The superpowers, with all their weapons of mass destruction, have declared war against weak states in order to dominate their economic resources. They endeavor greatly to obliterate the religious and social consciousness of such countries in order to keep them under their influence.

It is not possible to get rid of this dark nightmarish perdition upon the colonized nations except through the spread of Islamic fundamentals and promotion of its true motives that are aimed at pure justice and truth.

1– *Surah A'rāf* 7:31. The English translations of the Qur'an throughout this book are by Ali Quli Qara'i with minor alterations. [ed.]

The enlightening Islamic principles in the world of politics, government, and society define procedures for reforming the society and establishing a just and fair ruling system in which every one may enjoy its bounties.

–8–

There is nothing more comical than the claim of some political administrations accusing Islam of supporting terrorism. This accusation is totally inapplicable to the virtuous religion of God, the torchbearer of which is Muḥammad (ṣ)[1], the greatest of all the holy Prophets (ʿa), who has called for peace on the earth. Islam adamantly opposes terrorism and its advocates. There is no more valid proof of this than the saying of God the Most High:

إِنَّمَا جَزَاء الَّذِينَ يُحَارِبُونَ اللّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَيَسْعَوْنَ فِي الأَرْضِ فَسَادًا أَن يُقَتَّلُواْ أَوْ يُصَلَّبُواْ أَوْ تُقَطَّعَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَأَرْجُلُهُم مِّنْ خِلافٍ أَوْ يُنفَوْاْ مِنَ الأَرْضِ

Indeed the requital of those who wage war against Allah and His Apostle, and try to cause corruption on earth, is that they shall be slain or crucified, or have their hands and feet cut off from opposite sides or be banished from the land.[2]

Verily Islam has considered the requital and punishment of those causing corruption on earth to be severe that it should be outright death, crucifixion, amputation, or banishment.

This is how Islam looks upon terrorism: as a cause of corruption on earth and its punishment is torment and death.

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This research investigates the Islamic movement with its everlasting values that address the entire human lifecycle from

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1– This is short for *Òall allāh ʿalayh wa ālih* meaning peace of Allah upon him and his descendants. [ed.]
2– *Surah Mā'idah* 5:33.

our birth, throughout our growth and maturity until our death. Islam has never neglected any aspect of humanity; it has presented methods to accurately and systematically train and reform us so that we return to the fundamentals of Islam bringing about happiness in life and superiority in behavior and all other affairs.

I believe that no other heavenly religion has shown such great concern about human correction and intellectual and societal improvement like Islam, the religion of Almighty God, the religion He is pleased with and has chosen for his servants to guide them towards the straightest path. With the hope that Almighty Allah restores the noble grace of Islam and blesses Muslims through the administration of Islam. Indeed Allah is the Master and has power over all things.

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Najaf al-Ashraf
Written by Baqir Shareef al-Qarashi
Jumada al-Ula 27th 1425 AH

INTRODUCTION

HUMAN DIGNITY AND ITS IMPORTANCE IN ISLAM

Islam pays much attention to humankind and has distinguished humans over all other living creatures. It has proposed an advanced system for human life in order to keep people from evil and harm and to guarantee them a free and honorable life with security and welfare.

Almighty Allah has honored humanity and has distinguished us by granting us intellect –the noblest of His creations– in order to lead us to a secure, stable, and happy life. If human beings obey Him, definitely the obedience shall draw blessings. As Hakim al-Muʿarrah says:

By the power of knowledge human beings have made use of other animals for their own benefits and to this end they have reached the depth of the oceans to extract its resources, they have traveled into space overcoming all barriers, they monitor the earth from space taking pictures of all parts of the earth, including its layers, mountains, and oceans in order to discover the reason for phenomena such as earthquakes and eruptions. It does not end here. Humans have built spacecraft to search for inhabitable planets in which to live. Up to now, humans have discovered many uninhabitable planets.

This is the same human being whom God has honored with intellect and has made His vicegerent on Earth in order to establish justice and follow the path of righteous, to avoid sin

and to behave in a balanced and acceptable manner, to refrain from evil deeds such as arrogance, greediness, and tyranny, to be pious and faithful, and to adorn themselves with virtue and merit.

This is what Islam requires from human beings throughout all its teachings and laws, so that they may receive the respect of God and earn His vicegerency on the earth, to bear the responsibility that even the heavens, the earth, and the mountains were unable to bear. Human beings took the responsibility because they were ignorant oppressors: they did not fulfill their responsibility, except for some faithful believers who feared Almighty God.

According to our belief, these faithful were the Imams from the household of the holy Prophet (ṣ), those who invited others to societal reformation in the Arab and Islamic world. These loyal believers were those who shouldered the burden and fulfilled it in the human society with faith and sincerity. They suffered different types of punishment, torture and persecution while defending Islam, the rights of Muslims, and the oppressed, and they were finally martyred in the line of duty with pride and dignity.

However, let's go back to the issue of human dignity in Islam. Islam has formulated the best and most authentic methods to exalt human beings, preserve their security, and realize their rights, some of which are as follows:

1. Protecting Life

Islam has resolutely banned unjustified bloodshed considering it one of the most repugnant of crimes and grievous of sins. Consequently, it warns murderers of eternity in hellfire which is the harshest form of punishment. These are some verses of the holy Qur'ān in this respect:

1. The Almighty has stated:

مَن قَتَلَ نَفْسًا بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ أَوْ فَسَادٍ فِي الأَرْضِ فَكَأَنَّمَا قَتَلَ النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا

...whoever kills a soul, without its being guilty of manslaughter or corruption on the earth, is as though that person had killed all humankind.[1]

Notice how the holy Qur'ān considers murder of a single soul equal to the killing of all of humankind.

2. The Most High has also said:

وَمَن يَقْتُلْ مُؤْمِنًا مُّتَعَمِّدًا فَجَزَآؤُهُ جَهَنَّمُ خَالِدًا فِيهَا وَغَضِبَ اللّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَلَعَنَهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُ عَذَابًا عَظِيمًا

Should anyone kill a believer intentionally, that person's requital shall be Hell to abide therein [forever]; Allah shall be wrathful at such persons and curse them and He shall prepare for them a great punishment.[2]

Verily, murderers deserve eternity in hellfire, which is the hardest form of punishment and torment exercised by Almighty God.

3. God the Most High has said:

وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَدْعُونَ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ وَلَا يَقْتُلُونَ النَّفْسَ الَّتِي حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ وَلَا يَزْنُونَ وَمَن يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ يَلْقَ أَثَامًا يُضَاعَفْ لَهُ الْعَذَابُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَيَخْلُدْ فِيهِ مُهَانًا

Those who do not invoke another god besides Allah, and do not kill a soul whose life Allah has made inviolable, except with due cause, and do not commit fornication. But those who do this

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1– *Surah Mā'idah* 5:32.
2– *Surah Nisā'* 4:93.

shall encounter its retribution, the punishment being doubled for them on the Day of Resurrection. In it they will abide in humiliation forever.[1]

The holy Qur'ān considers the crimes of polytheism, atheism, murder, and fornication similar in that they all entail double punishment and eternity in hellfire.

The holy tradition, like the holy Qur'ān, has also stressed the necessity of shunning murder. Below are some of the Narrations cited in this respect:

1. The holy Prophet (ṣ) has declared:

> As long as a person refrains from shedding blood, that person will be within the boundaries of religion.[2]

In this respect individuals are considered to be in the boundary of religion unless they commit murder. If someone does commit murder, that person is considered to be outside the bounds of the religion.

2. The holy Prophet (ṣ) has said:

> The destruction of the entire world is easier before God than the murder of a Muslim.[3]

3. The holy Prophet of God (ṣ) has also stated:

> Any sin might be forgiven by God, except that of a person who dies as an unbeliever or who intentionally murders a believer.[4]

4. The holy Prophet of God (ṣ) has said:

> I swear to God who has appointed me with the truth,

1– *Surah Furqān* 25:68-69.
2– *Mustadrak al-Wasā'il*, vol. 18, p. 208.
3– *Bihar al-Anwār*, vol. 75, p. 101.
4– Shaukani, *Nail al-AwÔār*, vol. 7, p. 44. The narration was reported from Muʿāwiyah who, due to his political greed, murdered a lot of people and spread grief and misery throughout the Muslim countries.

> if any inhabitant of heaven or earth takes part in murdering a Muslim, or even consents to it, God will certainly condemn them to hellfire.[1]

5. During his reign, the Commander of the Faithful, ʿAlī (ʿa),[2] told Mālik al-Ashtar:

> Avoid blood and shedding it unjustly because nothing causes disaster and decreases the bounties and shortens the life span like shedding blood unjustly; indeed on the Day of Judgment God the most Glorious shall commence Judgment with those who have shed blood.[3]

There are numerous Narrations of this type mentioning the punishment of those who unjustly shed blood. In fact this has demonstrated the importance Islam has given to life and its preservation.

Retribution in Kind [qiṣāṣ]

Taking the life of murderers in retaliation for their offence is a fair commandment which brings about security, stability and settlement of disputes. It also prevents such crimes.

The Most High has said:

وَلَكُمْ فِي الْقِصَاصِ حَيَاةٌ يَا أُولِيْ الأَلْبَابِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ

There is life for you in retribution, O you who possess intellects! Maybe you will be Godwary![4]

Abdul-Qādir ʿAudah has said:

There has been no punishment in the whole world whether in the past or at present that is superior to retribution in kind

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1– *Furuʿ al-Kāfi*, vol. 7, p. 272-273.
2– This is the abbreviation of ʿalayh as-salām, ʿalayhā as-salām, or ʿalayhim as-salām; meaning peace be upon him/her/them. [ed.]
3– *Nahj al-Balāghah*, p. 443.
4– *Surah Baqarah* 2:179.

[*qiṣāṣ*]. It is the fairest of punishments and leads to security and order since criminals usually refrain from committing a crime when they realize their punishment would be the same as the committed crime. Generally, what seduces criminals into committing homicide and harming others is the struggle for survival and the temptation of superiority and dominance. Therefore, criminals prefer to refrain from killing to avoid retribution and remain alive since they know they won't stay alive if they kill someone. It may make them dominant at that moment, but later others will take the dominance. Therefore they forego dominance through murder in order to stay alive. There are many real examples that we can witness in our daily life; for example, a man with a fiery temper who easily commits bad deeds usually refrains from showing an aggressive reaction in front of a strong rival who is more powerful and can retaliate. Moreover an armed man who is ready to do anything in order to achieve his goals usually refrains from using his weapons when he finds himself facing an enemy with the same or more powerful weapons, someone who can fight back on equal grounds. Even warriors more often give up a fight in which the opponent is stronger or faster and only fights those that are weaker. This is, in fact, the nature of human beings.

This is the reason why *qiṣāṣ* has been introduced in Islamic law. *Qiṣāṣ* is a pre-emptive measure against the temptation of committing a sin. This reasoning is completely in line with modern psychological findings as well.[1]

According to Qatādah:

God has made *qiṣāṣ* a source of life and also of lessons to the unenlightened and the foolish. Many are the people who have been tempted to carry out schemes, but the fear of retribution prevented them from committing such plots. God has made people safe from one another through the law of retribution.

1– *At-Tashrī' al-Jinā'ī al-Islāmī*, vol. 1, p. 464-465.

God has never ordered us to do anything unless it is beneficial to us in this world and in the hereafter, likewise He has never prohibited anything other than corruption in the world and in religion. God knows best what benefits us.[1]

In his Qur'ānic commentary, Sayyid Muḥammad Riḍā has said:

Astute persons, who are concerned about the wellbeing of the nations and who look at issues on the basis of general human welfare and not according to personal interests or the interests of their country, perceive *qiṣāṣ*as– defined in Islamic law– to be just and equitable and to be a principle that evolves nations and tribes, the neglect of which gives criminals the audacity to shed blood. Fear of jail and punishment may be effective in preventing crime in many countries -European countries where welfare commonplace- but in other countries it might not be so effective since some ruthless people enjoy doing evil because they feel that prison is a better place than their home.[2]

The belief that capital punishment contradicts personal freedom is a groundless belief since a person's life is the sole property of that person. How can the law or the society tolerate such property being assaulted?[3]

Protecting life and the health of human beings and safeguarding their blood is only possible through the practice of retribution [*qiṣāṣ*] against criminals in order to serve as lesson to others. An old Arabic proverb says: *"Nothing is more destructive to killing than killing."* And indeed the holy Qur'ān has announced the law of retribution with the best explanation. Thus the Most High has said:

وَلَكُمْ فِي الْقِصَاصِ حَيَاةٌ يَا أُولِيْ الأَلْبَابِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ

There is life for you in retribution, O you who possess

1– *Tafsīr aÔ-Óabarīi*, vol. 2, p. 114.
2– *Tafsīr al-Minār*, vol. 2, p. 124.
3– *Al-QiÒāÒ fī al-Islām*, p. 100.

intellects! Maybe you will be Godwary![1]

Murder must be encountered with the harshest of punishments: execution. Definitely if it is implemented it will prevent much crime.

1. Blood Money for Murder

God has designated an amount as blood money financially equal to retribution which many people cannot afford. Blood money consists of one of the following items:

1. One hundred aged male camels;

2. one hundred cattle;

3. one thousand dinars –a dinar is equivalent to three quarters of one *mithqal* (weight unit equal to around 10 g) of coined gold;

4. one thousand sheep;

5. ten thousand dirham of silver coin; or

6. two hundred sets of clothes (each composed of two clothing articles).

Paying one of the aforementioned items is mandatory and must be deducted from the wealth of a murderer within one year.[2]

Notice the severity of retribution and blood money which Islam has made incumbent upon murderers. Indeed, this indicates how important Islam deems prevention of deliberate murder, safeguarding lives, and protecting people against murder and aggression.

2. Prohibition of Causing Terror

Among the Islamic commandments aimed at respect of human beings and preservation of their dignity is strict prohibition of terrorizing and oppressing people. Here are some Narrations cited in this respect:

1– *Surah Baqarah* 2:179.
2– Imām al-Khū'ī, *Mabānī Takmīlāt al-Manhaj*, vol. 2, p. 198.

1. The holy Prophet (ṣ) has declared:

> Whoever casts a frightening gaze at a Muslim unjustly causing fear, God shall make that person fearful on the Day of Resurrection.[1]

2. Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) has said:

> Whoever exercises power to terrify and harm a Muslim shall be sent to the hellfire even if that Muslim is not harmed and whoever exercises power to terrify and harm a Muslim and is successful in causing harm shall be cast into the hellfire together with the Pharaoh and his household.[2]

There are many other Narrations that have prohibited terrorizing others.

3. Prohibition of Causing Harm or Humiliation

Islam has prohibited causing harm and humiliation because they are forms of tyranny and oppression. The prohibition of causing harm is reflected in the holy Qur'ān. God the Most High has declared:

وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْذُونَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ بِغَيْرِ مَا اكْتَسَبُوا فَقَدِ احْتَمَلُوا بُهْتَانًا وَإِثْمًا مُّبِينًا

Those who torment faithful men and women undeservedly, certainly bear the guilt of slander and flagrant sin.[3]

The holy Prophet of God (ṣ) has said:

> It is not permitted for believers to cast looks at their religious brothers (or sisters) that might irritate them.[4]

1– *An-Niẓām at-Tarbawi fi al-Islam*, p. 350.
2– *UÒūl al-Kāfi*, vol. 2, p. 368.
3– *Surah Ahzāb* 33:58.
4– *Majmūʿah Warrām*, vol. 1, p. 98.

Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) has declared:

> Whoever humiliates and degrades a believer for their poverty, God shall degrade in front of all His creatures on the Day of Resurrection.[1]

Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) has also said:

> Allah shall not stop humiliating whoever humiliates a poor or wealthy believer until the person stops the humiliation.[2]

Indeed, human beings hold a lofty position before God therefore He has prohibited all kinds of aggression, whether by word or by action.

4. Verbal Abuse

Insulting human beings negates the dignity that was granted to them by Almighty God. Islam has forbidden Muslims from using profanity even against the enemies of the religion.

God the Most High has stated:

وَلاَ تَسُبُّواْ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِ اللّهِ فَيَسُبُّواْ اللّهَ عَدْوًا بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ

Do not abuse those whom they invoke besides Allah, lest they should abuse Allah out of hostility, without any knowledge.[3]

The holy Prophet of God (ṣ) has said:

> Cursing believers is evil, their murder is disbelief, eating their flesh (i.e. backbiting or gossip) is a sin, and the dignity of their property is no less than that of their blood.[4]

Imam Abu Jaʿfar (ʿa) has reported:

> A man from the Banī Tamīm tribe came to the holy

1– *UÒūl al-Kāfī*, vol. 2, p. 353.
2– *Ibid*, p. 351.
3– *Surah An'ām* 6:108.
4– *UÒūl al-Kāfī*, vol. 2, pp. 359-360.

> Prophet (ṣ) seeking guidance. The holy Prophet advised him to avoid cursing others as it creates enmity among people.[1]

Imam Abu Jaʿfar (ʿa) has also declared:

> Someone who defames a believer will die of the worst death and shall never be blessed.[2]

Indeed, cursing, blaspheming and slander are contrary to human dignity.

5. Exposing Faults and Flaws

Among the vices that contradict human dignity is exposing and publicizing the faults of others. Islam has absolutely forbidden this and calls upon us to refrain from it as per the holy Qur'ān where God the Most High has stated:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُحِبُّونَ أَن تَشِيعَ الْفَاحِشَةُ فِي الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ

Indeed those who want indecency to spread among the faithful –there is a painful punishment for them in the world and the Hereafter.[3]

In Islamic tradition, there are also various Narrations that have forbidden this. Several of them are as follows:

1. The holy Prophet (ṣ) has said:

> O you who believe and have submitted in words without submission in heart, do not seek out the lapses of Muslims because Almighty Allah will seek out the lapses of whoever does this. Whoever's lapses God seeks out will be exposed.[4]

1– *Ibid*, p. 360.
2– *Ibid*, p. 361.
3– *Surah Nūr* 24:19. Also see:– *UÒūl al-Kāfī*, vol. 2, p. 357.
4– *Ibid*, p. 355.

2. Imam Bāqir (ʿa) has said:

> The virtue that will most quickly receive its reward is kindness and the vice that will most quickly receive its punishment is oppression. The failings suffice in persons who see a fault in people while they are blind it in themselves or blame people for what they are not able to desist from themselves or upset their companions for what does not concern them.[1]

3. Imam Abu Jaʿfar (ʿa) has said:

> The closest state to unbelief is when a person probes others in their religion tracing their flaws to reproach them for those flaws some other day.[2]

6. Degrading Others

Among the vices Islam has warned against is degrading and reproaching other Muslims. Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) is quoted as saying:

> Those who encounter their Muslim brother or sister with reproach, Almighty Allah will reproach them in this world and in the hereafter.[3]

Imam Abu ʿAbdullah (ʿa) has stated:

> Those who speak about a believer in order to degrade and destroy that person's reputation before others, Allah shall oust them from His guardianship into that of the devil.[4]

There are many other Narrations that have been reported from the rightly-guided Imams (ʿa), all of which have firmly prohibited the violation of human dignity. It has also emphasized that the language of kindness, affection, friendship, and devotion should prevail among Muslims. There is no room

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1– *Ibid*, pp. 459-460.
2– *Ibid*, p. 355.
3– *Ibid*, p. 356.
4– *Ibid*, p. 358.

for annoying or humiliating each other in Islam as it leads to disintegration and hatred among Muslims.

7. Oppression

Oppression against a fellow human being is another prohibited behavior in Islam. It lays emphasis on this prohibition because it conflicts with human dignity and violates the right to live safely without fear. The following are several examples of the many Narrations from the holy Prophet (ṣ) and his holy household (ʿa) that stress this prohibition:

1. The holy Prophet (ṣ) has said:

> Avoid oppression since it is darkness on the Day of Resurrection.[1]

2. Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) has stated:

> Those who disregard the oppression of an oppressor, Allah shall give dominance to the oppressor over them, He will not accept their supplications to Him, and He will not compensate them for the oppression.[2]

3. Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) has also said:

> Oppressors, those who render assistance to oppressors, and those who consent to oppression are all partners.[3]

Notice how oppressors are warned of retribution on the Day of Resurrection and what punishment God has determined for them.

Indeed Islam desires a life of security and tranquility for all human beings in a world free of oppression, inequity, and aggression.

These examples of Narrations from the holy Prophet (ṣ) and his

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1– *Ibid*, p. 332.
2– *Ibid*, p. 334.
3– *Ibid*, p. 333.

household (ʿa) clearly demonstrate the importance Islam places on human beings and their dignity; they also show that Almighty God wants human beings to be His vicegerents on an earth free of bloodshed, fear, sin, and misconduct.

HUMAN BEINGS: THEIR GENESIS, BIRTH AND UPBRINGING

In my opinion, there is no religion among the heavenly religions or social creeds that accompanies human beings throughout all the stages of their life except Islam. It is a blessing from God upon His servants and goes hand in hand with humans from even before our birth, when we are fetuses in our mother's womb, and continues its companionship after our birth as we grow up and mature. It provides excellent plans for our upbringing and edification making us immune to moral deviations so that we become behaviorally normal human beings in accordance with family and society; that is to say that we become decent members of the society.

In a nutshell, we shall discuss some issues regarding medical and health procedures recommended by Islam in order to secure the health of the fetus in the womb and the person after her or his birth in addition to other issues related to the training and education of the child.

Pregnancy Stage

The initial stages of the formation of the human body are singular manifestations of the tremendous power and omnipotence of Almighty Allah. They are one of the wonders of His creation of these living creatures. A human, in the beginning, is just a tiny cell that is produced as a result of an act of fertilization between the ovum and the sperm. When the two cells merge a human person is originated. At that moment,

Almighty Allah determines whether the person is to be male or female. According to geneticists, in this stage of formation all the genetic characteristics and traits of the person are determined.[1] Indicating the formation of humans, God Almighty has stated:

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنسَانَ مِن سُلَالَةٍ مِّن طِينٍ ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَاهُ نُطْفَةً فِي قَرَارٍ مَّكِينٍ ثُمَّ خَلَقْنَا النُّطْفَةَ عَلَقَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْعَلَقَةَ مُضْغَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْمُضْغَةَ عِظَامًا فَكَسَوْنَا الْعِظَامَ لَحْمًا ثُمَّ أَنشَأْنَاهُ خَلْقًا آخَرَ فَتَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ أَحْسَنُ الْخَالِقِينَ

Certainly We created man from an extract of clay. Then We made him a drop of [seminal] fluid [lodged] in a secure abode. Then We created the drop of fluid as a clinging mass. Then We created the clinging mass as a fleshy tissue. Then We created the fleshy tissue as bones. Then We clothed the bones with flesh. Then We produced him as [yet] another creature. So blessed is Allah, the best of creators![2]

The following are some of Islam's recommendations for pregnant women that affect their health and that of their unborn children.

Healthy Food

It is certain that consumption of healthy food by pregnant women is very effective for the healthiness and beauty of the newly born infant. For this reason, Islam emphasizes the consumption of some foods by pregnant women.

1. Quince

Quince is one of the most delicious of fruits and is also full of vitamins like vitamin A and B. It strengthens the heart and is beneficial for those suffering from tuberculosis, intestinal or

1– For more information see: *An-Niẓām at-Tarbawi fi al-Islam*, pp. 58-59.
2– *Surah Mu'minūn* 23:12-14.

gastric bleeding, and other illnesses.[1]

Islam recommends that pregnant women eat quince because will make the infant smell better and improve the color of his or her skin.[2]

Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) once looked at a handsome youth saying:

> The father of this young man must have eaten quince.[3]

Indeed the rightly-guided Imams have recommended pregnant women eat quince due to its benefits for the fetus.

2. Dairy Products

Dairies are nutritious foods the eating of which is encouraged by Islam for pregnant women.

The Messenger of Allah (ṣ) has said:

> Give milk products to your pregnant women because they increase the child's intellect.[4]

It is quoted from Jābir that:

> Someone asked the holy Prophet (ṣ), "Are our illnesses curable?" He replied, "Of course." And he was cured. Indeed God has not sent down any illnesses unless He has provided a cure for it. Drink cow dairies because its source is all kinds of plants.[5]

Many Narrations have been reported from the guided Imams (ʿa), encouraging the drinking of dairies.

Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) has said:

1– *Al-Ghazā' Lā ad-Dawā'*, p. 110.
2– *Wasā'il ash-Shī'ah*, vol. 15, p. 133.
3– *Ibid*, p. 134.
4– *Ramz aÒ-Ñiḥḥah fi Tibb an-Nabī wa al-A'imah*, p. 10.
5– *Mustadrak al-Wasā'il*, vol. 16, p. 374.

> Dairies are the food of Messengers.[1]

Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) also told a person who was complaining of his physical weakness:

> Drink milk products because they develop the muscles and strengthen the bones.[2]

Modern medical research has proven the statements of the Imams concerning the benefits of milk products. According to Russian researcher, Dr. Motshenkov, frequent use of dairies such as yogurt cleans the intestine of germs and prevents fermentation leading to food poisoning. It also delays signs of old age such as weakening, contractions, and spasms of the muscles. He tested these ideas on his own body by using a lot of diaries and noticed the benefits in it.

Regarding the importance of yogurt, there are pills containing dairy ferment in drugstores that doctors prescribe for those who suffer from intestinal infection.[3]

Indeed, milk products offer many other benefits. Therefore, the infallible Imams (ʿa) have encouraged consumption of these foods to pregnant women and others because they consider dairy products to be important elements in corporal health.

3. Meat

Pregnant women must eat various types of meat because they contain proteins needed by the body.

4. Fruits and Vegetables

It is good for pregnant women to eat a lot of vegetables and fruits because they are full of both vitamin A and Iron.[4]

5. Oil and Starch

Medical doctors caution pregnant women against eating oily

1– *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 6, p. 336.
2– *Al-Maḥāsin*, vol. 2, p. 492.
3– *Al-Ghazā' lā ad-Dawā'*, p. 443.
4– *Niẓām al-Usrah fi al-Islām*, p. 81.

and starchy food due to their considerable harm to them.[1]

Birth

When the formation of the fetus complete and it is strong enough to enter into this world, God makes it painful for the mother. Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) was quoted as saying:

> Until its genesis (i.e. that of the fetus) is complete, its body becomes sturdy, its skin becomes strong enough to tolerate air, and its eyes become strong enough to endure light, the baby unsettles its mother and agitates her in a most intense and arduous manner.[2]

The mother gives birth while undergoing a great deal of labor pain but her love for the baby makes it easy for her to tolerate the severe pain. By hearing the first cry of her baby she forgets all the pain.

Indeed, this is part of human life which occurs at the will and power of God and human beings have little control over the affair.

Islamic Rituals for Newborns

Islam advises us to perform some rituals for newly born Muslim babies. Some of them are as follows:

1. The Call to Prayer and Call to Commencement of Prayer [Adhān and Iqāmah]

It is the duty of the father, mother, or any other person present to welcome the new baby into the world by reciting the Azan [*adhān*] in his or her right ear and the *Iqāmah* in her or his left ear. The reason for this may be that the first sounds that enter the baby's ear be these statements: "God is the greatest, there is no god but Allah" [*allāhu akbar, lā ilāha illa allāh*].

These luminous words are the source of refulgence on earth; they are the everlasting song of Islam. It was reported in a

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1– *Íayāt aÔ-Óifl*, pp. 7-8.
2– *Íayāt al-Imām aÒ-Ñādiq (ʿa)*, vol. 3, p. 337.

narration that:

> It serves as a barrier against Satan; it is a shield and protection for the child.[1]

2. Naming the Infant

Islam has recommended the best and the most beautiful names for the baby whether male or female so that he or she feels virtuous and important within the family. Imam Abu al-Ḥasan (ʿa) has said:

> The first favor a man does for his child is to choose a good name for him or her. Therefore each of you should give good names to your children.[2]

It has been stated in some Narrations that giving a child a good name is one of the rights of the child incumbent upon her or his father.

Once, a man came to the holy Prophet of God (ṣ) and asked, "What is the right of this son of mine?" pointing at his son. The holy Prophet (ṣ) replied, "Bestow upon him a good name and good conduct and give him a worthy position."[3]

The best names in Islam are names declaring servitude to Almighty God who is the Creator of the world and the One who has granted all life; especially names like Abdullāh (servant of Allah), Abdulkhāliq (servant of the Creator), Abdurraḥmān (servant of the Merciful), etc. Additionally, the names of the Imams (ʿa), the guardians of the truth and the good friends of Allah on the earth, are among the best of names.

The names that are associated with suffering, bitterness, and war[4] are among the worst of names because they bear the denotation of violence, malediction, and ignorance. Indeed, all

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1– *Wasā'il ash-Shī'ah*, vol. 21, p. 405.
2– *Ibid*, p. 288.
3– *Ibid*, p. 290.
4– *Ibid*, p. 398.

such names are in opposition to Islam. Moreover, names like Hakam, Khālid[1], Marwān, and other names used by the enemies of God and His Prophet are undesirable.

3. Sacrifice for the Newborn ['aqīqah]

Sacrifice on the seventh day after birth is one of the Islamic rituals for newborns. It serves as respect to the child and diverts calamity and misfortune away from him or her. Its meat is either distributed among the poor or is cooked and the poor are invited to eat the cooked food. This tradition comes from the holy Prophet (ṣ) when Imam Ḥasan (ʿa), the leader of the youth of the paradise and the flower of the holy Prophet (ṣ), was born and the holy Prophet sacrificed a ram on the seventh day after his birth.[2]

4- Shaving the Head of the Newborn:

Shaving the head of the baby[3] and giving an amount equivalent to the hair in weight of gold or silver to the poor as charity [*ṣadaqah*] is one of the desirable religious acts that are encouraged by Islam.

These were some of the Islamic rituals that serve as respect and a welcome to the new born baby.

Breast-feeding the Infant

Islam has made it incumbent upon the mother to feed her baby with her colostrum, i.e. the first milk after giving birth, and the mother must not avoid shirk this duty. Regarding this obligation, some jurists explain that an infant cannot survive without it.[4]

A short review on the composition of colostrum and its benefits to the baby and the mother can be beneficial.

1– *Ibid*, p. 399.
2– *Íayāt Imām al-Íasan ('a)*, vol. 1, p. 53.
3– *Íayāt Imām al-Íusayn ('a)*, vol. 1, p. 54.
4– *Ar-RauÃah al-Bahiyah fī Sharḥ al-Lum'ah ad-Damashqiyah,* vol. 5, p. 453.

The Composition of Colostrum

Colostrum contains calcium-rich content meant to strengthen the bones of the baby. It also contains Iron which promotes formation of the red blood cells required by the baby's body. Additionally, it contains proteins and vitamins that form most of the tissues of the body. These are the basic materials for building the body of an infant in the first days of its life. Colostrum also contains other constituents such as antibodies.[1]

The Benefit of Colostrum to the Mother

The first milk is beneficial not only for the infant but for the mother as well.

According to medical doctors, breast-feeding a baby after birth causes the decrease of nervous fibers in the womb. This decrease helps release the placenta from the walls of the womb and also assists in preventing bleeding from different parts of the womb.[2]

In addition to these benefits, when a mother breast feeds her baby she feels happy and forgets the pain she has undergone during labor.

The Food for a Woman after Childbirth

Islam has paid special attention to mothers. It considers paradise to be under the feet of mothers. Indeed, what a great respect and honor to them! Islam has recommended women to eat dates after childbirth due to the good effect on their health and that of their babies.

Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) has reported from his brother in faith and cousin, the holy Prophet of God (ṣ), that:

> Let dates be the first thing a woman takes after childbirth as Almighty Allah said to Maryam (Mary):

1– *Niẓām al-Usrah fi al-Islam*, p. 86.
2– *Tabiʿat al-Insan al-Bailāghiyah*, p. 58.

وَهُزِّي إِلَيْكِ بِجِذْعِ النَّخْلَةِ تُسَاقِطْ عَلَيْكِ رُطَبًا جَنِيًّا

Shake the trunk of the palm tree, freshly picked dates will drop upon you.[1]

One of the companions stood up and said, "O Messenger of God, what if it is not date season?" The holy Prophet of God (ṣ) replied, "Seven dates from your cities since Almighty God has stated, 'I swear upon My Glory, My Greatness, My Excellency and My Exaltedness that a woman will not eat dates after childbirth but that her son or daughter becomes tolerant'."[2]

Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) has emphasized this by stating:

> There is nothing like dates that helps women recover their health after childbed. Indeed, Almighty God fed Mary (ʿa) with fresh dates after her childbed.[3]

Surely eating dates and other fruits after childbirth plays an important role in the infant's health as well as his or her mental and spiritual formation.

Recommendations for Women after Childbirth and Nursing Mothers

The following are recommendations for women after childbed and nursing mothers. They are very important and have also been mentioned in a previous book named *Niẓām al-Usra Fī al-Islām*.

1. Washing and Sterilizing Clothes

They should wear clean clothes and drink sterilized water in order to avoid fever after childbed.[4]

1– *Al-Maḥāsin*, vol. 2, p. 535;– *Surah Maryam*, 19:25.
2– *Al-Maḥāsin*, vol. 2, p. 535.
3– *Ibid*.
4– *Niẓām al-Usra fi al-Islām*, p. 88.

2. Avoid Anxiety

It is necessary for nursing women to avoid anxiety. They should keep this in mind because anxiety, stress and tension reduces a mother's milk. Therefore, they should try to be calm and at ease at all times.[1]

3. Provision of Comfort for the Child

A nursing woman must create a peaceful atmosphere for her infant and expose him or her to clean air and light of the sun so that her infant is not affected with diseases such as enteritis, rickets, and other types of child diseases.[2]

4. Regulation of Breast-feeding

Mothers must regulate their breast-feeding. They should not feed their babies continuously but should never deprive the child of milk either because of the detrimental effect on the child.[3]

The guidelines of breast-feeding are as follows:

1. At the beginning after birth, the mother should breast-feed the child once every three hours.

2. As the child grows, she should breast-feed the child once every two hours. It is recommended in both cases to feed from both breasts. Moreover, the feeding must not be at the infant's request or to keep him or her quiet because this will cause the child to form the habit of crying for her or his satisfaction.[4]

5. Supervision of the Child's Training by the Mother

Psychologists have emphasized the importance of mothers supervising the training of their children and that they must not only rely on teachers because the presence of the mother

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1– *Sihat al-Hāmil*, p. 190.
2– *Niẓām al-Usra fi al-Islām*, p. 88.
3– *Ibid*.
4– *Ibid*.

encourages the child and lessens the child's anxiety.[1]

6. Presence of the Mother

Continuous absence of the mother in the first years of a baby's life leaves a detrimental impact on the mentality of the baby because the baby shall feel the absence of the mother which in turn causes his or her misery.

Absence of a mother creates stress and tension in the baby; a fact that was proved by psychological studies. According to Bolbi, you could read the signs of horror and isolation on the faces of the children that were forced to move away from major cities during the Second World War, were deprived of the attention and care of their mothers, and were cared for by other people. These children showed no tendency to make friends with other children and even with their elders. They couldn't express their love to other people but rather felt alienated and hate towards the society.

Indeed, they were more difficult to treat than aberrant youths and juvenile delinquents.[2]

The absence of a mother from her baby makes the baby cry because he or she naturally feels the mother is the only one who cares for and loves her or him.

7. Refraining from Physical Maltreatment

Mothers should refrain from beating their crying babies because it implants fear in them. The holy Prophet (ṣ) has prohibited beating babies.

Beating babies does not cause them to change their behavior but rather the opposite. In addition, it creates tension, stress, and fear in the baby.[3]

1– *'Ilm an-Nafs at-Tarbawi*, p. 140.
2– *Al-AmrāÃ an-Nafsiyyah wa al-'Aqliyah*, p. 79.
3– *Niẓām al-Usra fi al-Islām*, p. 90.

8. Breast-feeding by the Mother

What is of paramount importance is breast-feeding of the baby by the mother herself because the baby acquires love and intimacy from the mother through breast-feeding. Medical research has proven the fact that the rate of death is lower in babies that were breast-fed by their mothers than those who were not and their bodies are also stronger than other babies.[1]

The Commander of the Faithful, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa), concerning the importance of breast-feeding by mothers, has said:

> There is no milk more valuable for babies than their mother's milk.[2]

Psychologists hold that breast feeding is not just for satisfying biological needs, i.e. the need for food, rather it is a social interaction that involves the mother and her baby where the baby interacts for the first time with a person with particular cultural traditions who dictates the method of drinking milk.

It is obvious that babies are influenced by the spiritual condition of their mothers while nursing. Thus, the mother's health and the stability or instability of a mother regarding her maternal role and her family responsibilities affect the baby.

Clearly, peaceful breast-feeding creates security, optimism, and trust within the baby regarding the world because the mother is the first intermediary between the baby and this world. Therefore, if a mother behaves nicely with her baby, it increases the baby's trust regarding the world. On the other hand, the baby will feel fear and alienation throughout his or her life if the mother's behavior is bad.[3]

Weaning a Child

The best time for weaning a child is the indicated time by the

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1– *Ta'amulāt fī Sulūk al-Insān*, p. 110.
2– *Furū' al-Kāfī*, vol. 6, p. 40.
3– *Al-AmrāÃ an-Nafsiyyah wa al-Aqliyyah*, p. 77.

holy Qur'ān.

Almighty God has said:

وَالْوَالِدَاتُ يُرْضِعْنَ أَوْلاَدَهُنَّ حَوْلَيْنِ كَامِلَيْنِ

Mothers shall suckle their children for two full years.[1]

The holy Qur'ān has specified two years as the period for breast-feeding but the weaning of babies before this age will be harmful to the baby's health.[2] Also, to delay the weaning period beyond the stipulated period will cause delay in the baby's growth which is also harmful to the baby's health.[3]

Indeed, the weaning period is considered to be the critical period of a baby's life because weaning is not just replacing one food with another rather it is the separation of the baby from his or her mother's breast where he or she receives care and love.

Interaction with the Baby

After the weaning period, mothers should behave kindly and express their excessive love to their newly weaned child and should not prioritize their other children over the newborn baby. They should also observe the following points:

1. Laughing and smiling to their babies;

2. Placing much importance on the baby's affairs; and

3. Compensating the baby with more love due to the deprivation caused by weaning.[4]

Children cannot develop free from mental complexes without receiving love and affection from their mothers, who are the sources of their lives after Almighty God.

1– *Surah Baqarah* 2:233.
2– *'Ilm an-Nafs at-Tarbawi*, p. 128.
3– *Al-AmrāÃ an-Nafsiyyah wa al-Aqliyyah*, p. 77.
4– *Niẓām al-Usrah fi al-Islām*, p. 97.

Nurture by the Mother

It is necessary for children to be nurtured by their own mother because this helps the development of their personality and it prevents them from delinquency. Mothers must observe the following points when raising their children:

1. Protecting the baby from dangers because the child is inexperienced in the world;

2. addressing the needs of the child such as cleaning and washing his or her clothes and preparing his or her food;

3. raising the child decently to be free of deviation or delinquency; and

4. careful supervision of the child so as to prevent him or her from coming into contact with morally deviant kids.

Training

The training of girls should start from seven years of age while that of boys should start from the weaning period although some Jurists believe there is no difference between boys and girls and their training should start at the age of seven.[1]

An Unusual Theory

Nowadays, some social schools maintain that children should be separated from their mothers after birth or during their childhood and kept in nursery schools to train and educate them because parent's work in factories or offices prevents them from taking care of their children.

This theory is not in harmony with the traditions of life because according to psychologists and experts in the sciences, nursery institutions do not give love and affection to the child as much as mothers do. These institutions do not form important personality traits in the child such as peace and stability that are the most important factors in building a child's personality.

1– *Sharḥ ar-RauÃat al-Bahiyyah*, vol. 5, p. 459.

They believe that children who lack the love of their parents will end up with strong tendencies towards aggression, malefaction, and violation of other people's rights and will suffer from incurable mental complexes.[1]

Practical experience has proved that a child that has grown up under his or her mother's supervision is physically stronger, more affectionate, and cleverer than those who are brought up in nursery institutions.

Sayyid Quṭb believes practical experience has proved that in nurturing and training a child no system can replace the system of family because such systems or institutions damage the formation of children's personality and harms their training especially public nursery institutions that are based on artificial and authoritarian schools that strive to supplant the family system that was created for human beings by Almighty Allah. These schools pervade throughout European countries due to the loss of the families of large numbers of children in a cruel war that was caused by Western ignorance unrestrained by religious thought, a war that did not differentiate between peace seekers and militants, and also because of the evil system where mothers are obligated to work under wrong beliefs regarding the suitable social and economic system for humanity. By giving them into the care of nursery institutions, this system deprives children of their mother's care and attention and thus collides with the nature of children and harms their spiritual formation imbuing them with frustration and anxiety.[2]

Indeed, a mother's nurturing of her child is deemed to be a human necessity, a sin qua non of life, and those who reject maternal nurture are actually rejecting a life necessity.

1– *Niẓām al-Usrah fī al-Islām*, p. 99.
2– *Fī Âilāl al-Qur'ān* (second edition), vol. 3, p. 178.

Under the Wings of Family

One of the most important things in Islamic plans for reformation is the great attention they pay to the family. God has established family on a sound basis in order to allow its members to enjoy His bounty under its protection and to become blissful within it. Islam has established the following relationships within families:

1. Love

The type of family that was established by Islam is based on love, affection, and good relationships. God the Most High has said:

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُم مِّنْ أَنفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا لِّتَسْكُنُوا إِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُم مَّوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً

And of His signs is that He created for you mates from your own selves that you may take comfort in them, and He ordained affection and mercy between you.[1]

According to the Islamic point of view, every family must stick to the following requirements:

1. Continuous psychological solace; and

2. love and compassion, both of which fortify good behavior between spouses. Love must grow among the children as well and the affection that parents have for their children must prevail among the children as well.

Psychological research indicates that a child who is brought up in a caring and integrated family is safe from arrogance and aggression. Also, scientists have examined the foundations of mental disorder and have found that they mainly originate from the first periods of childhood, i.e. the first five or six years of the child's life which they spend with their parents before going

1– *Surah Rūm* 30:21.

to the school.

One of the recurring features of corrupt individuals is the extension of their childhood stage. Analytical-clinical research has shown that homes that are engulfed with love and understanding and are based on trust and respect are homes that can produce healthy intividuals.

On the other hand, families that invoke rancor and animosity based on fear and anger within children can only produce misguided and disruptive persons since those that are brought up in hostile environments cannot enjoy the feeling of affection in their adulthood regardless of where they seek it out.[1]

One of the main factors necessary to preserve the integration and unity of a family is the existence of love between spouses. Therefore, it is incumbent upon mature women to dedicate pure love to their husbands and fulfill all their needs otherwise they are putting their matrimonial life in risk.[2]

2. Cooperation

Cooperation between spouses in life affairs plays an important role in the unity of the family.

Marriage does not only mean the partnership of a man and a woman in reproduction of offspring rather it is their cooperation in all family and non-family affairs. This requires each of them to ignore the mistakes committed by the other party and to disregard each other's faults. The holy Prophet (ṣ) serves as an exalted example of cooperation with one's wives. Despite his high status, he worked together with his wives in managing house affairs. He advised his followers thus:

> The best of you is he who is best to his family and I'm best among you to my family.[3]

1– *Al-AmrāÃ an-Nafsiyyah wa al-Aqliyyah*, p. 74 – 76.

2– *Niẓām al-Usrah fi al-Islām*, p. 106.

3– *Wasā'il ash-Shī'ah*, vol. 14, p. 122; also– *Furū' al-Kāfi*, vol. 4, p.

His brother and heir, the portal to the city of knowledge, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) followed his ways as well and helped his wife, Fātimah (ʿa), the flesh and blood of the holy Prophet (ṣ) and the supreme woman of the two worlds, in all house affairs. Indeed, their pure life is an exalted example of a sacred matrimonial relationship in Islam.

It is of note that women are not legally bound according to Islamic law to manage house affairs and to prepare food for their husbands and children rather it is done as a humane favor and service.

3. Avoidance of Profanity

One of the important factors in unifying the family is avoidance of profane and aggressive words by the two spouses. They must comply with Islamic rules because foul language entails hatred among them and it is what mostly leads to the breakdown of matrimonial relations. Moreover, use of obscene language among spouses makes their children accustomed to bad habits and weak morals.

Psychological research has established that bitter words between the spouses ruins the marital relationship and weakens the intimacy between them.[1]

Islam has prohibited women from responding to their husbands with words that distress or upset them.

Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) has said:

> All the good acts of a woman who tells her husband, 'I have not seen good from you' are nullified.[2]

Islam desires the prosperity of families and the spread of love among its members. There is no doubt that exchanging decent

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1– *I'rif Nafsak*, p. 202.

2– *Niẓām al-Usrah fī al-Islām*, p. 108; quoted from *Wasā'il ash-Shī'ah*, vol. 14 p. 115.

words between spouses enhances their solidarity and promotes virtue among their children.

4. Avoidance of Dispute

Another influential factor in maintaining family solidarity is avoidance of dispute between spouses because it causes agitation that in most cases results in the collapse of marital relations. It also inflicts severe harm upon the children since an unhealthy relationship between spouses eventually affects the children's conduct and makes them feel that family life is a misery because it is built upon hostility and enmity. Definitely such ill impressions will extend into their future and they will use the same perverted method they have witnessed in their childhood with their own spouses and children.[1]

5. Lenience and Tolerance

Further factors that increase family unity are lenience and tolerance as well as avoidance of quarrels. If a spouse utters an indecent word the other should tolerate it without following it up. The holy Prophet (ṣ) has stated:

Whoever is patient with a woman with bad behavior hoping for divine reward, Allah shall reward him with the rewards of those who express gratitude to Almighty God.[2]

Indeed, lenience, tolerance, and refraining from reprisal greatly benefits the family because it lets the family live in an atmosphere full of love and harmony where the children can be brought up in a sound and healthy environment.

6. Honoring one's Wife

Islam has emphasized the necessity to respect and honor one's wife because it entails her intimacy with her husband. Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) has said:

May Almighty Allah's blessing be upon he who establishes a

1– *Niẓām al-Usrah fī al-Islām*, p. 109.
2– *Wasāʾil ash-Shīʿah*, vol. 14, p. 124.

kind relationship with his wife because Almighty Allah has given husbands authority over the affairs of their wives and has also appointed them as the guardians of their wives.[1]

Verily, respecting one's wife makes her sincere in her love and affectionate towards her husband and it also removes all hatred among them.

Showing Love and Affection to One's Wife

Another factor that fortifies the relationship between spouses is for husbands to show love and affection to their wife because women always desire that their husbands be sincere and affectionate with them. Monetary security and provision of material needs and luxury do not negate the necessity for a husband to be sincere and affectionate with his wife.[2]

These are some influential factors that enhance unity in a family. Most of these factors have also been mentioned in our book, *Niẓām al-Usrah Fī al-Islām* (The Family System in Islam). In this book, I have also mentioned factors that may lead to the collapse of the family and spread hatred among its members which may result in divorce.

Training Children

The appropriate guidelines for training children that need to be implemented by parents are as follows:

1. Refraining from Strictness

Parents should avoid using strict methods in training their children since this will cause severe damage to the child. Psychological studies indicate that parents need to avoid strictness as it causes children to feel their parents to be sources of suffering and pain. This, in turn, lessens the child's self-trust and trust in others.[3]

1– *Ibid*, p. 122.
2– *Al-Sulūk al-Insānī*, p. 206.
3– *Al-Sulūk al-Insānī*, p. 206.

In fact, excessive strictness denies children their natural right for love and affection. This shortcoming also deprives children of mental health and tranquility.

According to Dr. Fākhir, statistics shows that the majority of criminals have been brought up in houses where aggression and strictness is the prevailing rule and beating and other types of aggression are the only means of child training.[1]

The best way to achieve sound training of children is to train them in a polite manner as it leads to good health of the child in terms of both body and mind.

2. Refraining from Excessive Lenience

Parents should avoid adopting excessive leniency while training their children since this causes no less harm than aggression and strictness.

Showing too much lenience and ignoring the faults of children impels them to commit wrong both in the present and in the future leading them to an evil lifestyle.

Mothers who, according to their nature, give ground to their children and become too flexible regarding their faults and hinder the correct training of their children are making a great mistake. They are inviting disaster to their child and putting them in the path of tremendous evil.

3. Accustoming Children to Correct Attitudes

Parents should implant good behaviors in the minds of their children to make them decent persons and the apple of their eye. Among the good customs to be implanted in children are the following:

a. Refraining from recklessness;

b. keeping away from abjectness;

c. dealing with crises; and

1– *Niẓām al-Usrah fi al-Islām*, p. 136.

d. overcoming mental tensions and positively solving life problems through logical thought.

By implanting decent attitudes in the soul of a child, the parents have established a lot of benefits in the child and have created a perfect and complete personality in him or her free from evil thoughts, moral deviation, and inconsistency.

4. Inspiring Religious Beliefs in the Mind of the Child

It is the duty of parents to establish the essence of religion in the soul of their children since religious belief is exactly what can keep them safe from evil deeds in their future life.

Indeed, Islam is the genuine source of spiritual virtues. It safeguards human beings from being corrupted by sins and makes them good exemplars for others to emulate.

What is most important in Islamic training is to keep the child from bad behaviors such as:

a. Lying;

b. theft;

c. transgression against others; and

d. evil acts.

These are behaviors which parents need to prevent their children from committing.

5. Establishing Equality among Children

Islam has emphasized the necessity of equality in the status of each child. It considers equality to be one of the successful factors in training. Parents should not differentiate between their children because it leads to hatred and hostility among the children. Once, the holy Prophet (ṣ) rebuked a man who kissed one of his sons in front of the other asking him, “Why are you not just between them?”[1]

1– *Makārim al-Akhlāq*, p. 220.

Injustice between children creates anxiety in the minds of the deprived ones and it also creates hatred of the parent and of the sibling in the child's mind.

6. Avoidance of Obscenity

It is incumbent upon parents to avoid obscene words and impolite behavior in front of their children since children imitate their parents and when they find their parents indifferent to virtues and morality, it certainly affects their behavior and creates problems and crises in their future life.

These are some methods set up by Islam for training of children. We have also discussed this issue in our book, *Niẓām al-Usrah fi al-Islām* (The Family System in Islam).

Training Adolescent Children

It is necessary to briefly discuss the method of training adolescent children that have recently passed the stage of childhood. There is an obvious change in the individual's entire behavior. Some of these changes are as follows:

a. Becoming a thoughtful and perceptive person;

b. becoming a person with predefined behavior patterns; and

c. becoming attentive to the family.

These are some of the changes that occur in adolescents.[1] Training such an individual necessitates the family to be balanced and possess sound relations that can satisfy the emotions of the youths and create a sense of self-confidence in them. Parents should also create mutual trust between the child and other family members and assure youths of their love and continual assistance in times of hardship. Youths should also be proud of their parent's status in terms of thought, societal success, and attributes which are causes for glory and honor. It has been observed that as children grow into adolescents, they become more sensitive to the social status of their parents as

1– *Al-Sulūk al-Insānī*, p. 182.

well as their lifestyle and material possessions.

It is incumbent upon the parents to help their children in building their self-confidence when they attain the adolescent stage because it protects the child from the fears that result from weakness and incapability regarding different social phenomena.[1]

The Rights of a Father

A father is a great gift from God to a child since without his love and guidance in the child's affairs, the child could not exist on this earth. Islam has made it incumbent for children to obey their fathers and to carry out their will except if it is a sin against Allah the Most High. In his treatise on rights, Imam Zayn al-Ābidīn (ʿa) has declared:

> As for your father's rights, you have to know that he is your root and you are his branch, therefore you wouldn't have existed without him. Thus, if you find any thing in yourself that amazes you, be aware that the source of that blessing is your father. So praise Allah and be thankful to Him to the same extent. There is no power except that of Allah the Most High.[2]

The rights of a father regarding his child are very great. It is a child's duty to respect and honor his or her father, to obey his commands, and to provide his living expenses if he is in need, especially in his old age. It is the duty of children to serve and assist their fathers in order to make up for a part of their obligation.

The Rights of a Mother

How great is the mother and how great is her kindness and favor to her children. If it was not for her attention and affection, no human being could stay alive. She accepts her child wholeheartedly, takes the risks of the pregnancy and

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1– *Al-Sulūk al-Ijtimāʿī*, pp. 184-185.
2– *Risālat al-Ĥuqūq*, vol. 1, p. 489.

delivery, and devotes her entire life and sacrifices all her time and energy in order to protect her child. A mother has sleepless nights and sincerely serves her child until she or he grows up. In this respect, Imam Zayn al-Ābidīn (ʿa) has said:

> As for the rights of your mother, you should know that she carried you in a way that nobody else would and fed you from the fruits of her own heart the way nobody else would. She steadfastly took care of you with her ears, eyes, hands, feet, hair, face and all other parts of her body with happiness and joy. She endured much suffering and pain in order to make you strong and to protect you until she brought you into the world. She was content for you to be full and she hungry, for you to be clothed and she clotheless, for you to be sated and she thirsty, for you to be in shadow and she under the sun, and she was satisfied to suffer hardships so that you could enjoy blessings and to stay awake so that you could enjoy the pleasure of sleep. Her stomach served as a container for you; her lap served as your holder; her breast served as your flask; and her soul served as protection. She endured the hot and cold of this world for your sake; therefore be grateful to her to the same extent she has suffered hardships. Verily, you are not able to acknowledge her endeavors except with the help of Allah.[1]

No matter how hard human beings endeavor, even if we offer all services available to us to our mothers, we will not be able to fulfill even a small portion of the obligations we have towards our mothers. Someone carried his mother on his shoulders to complete the ritual circumambulation of the Kaʿbah while the holy Prophet (ṣ) was walking next to him. He asked the holy Prophet (ṣ), "Have I fulfilled her right?"

The holy Prophet (ṣ) looked at him and answered, "You are yet

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1– *Tuhaf al-Uqūl*, p. 257; also *Risallat al-Ĺuqūq*, vol. 1, p. 475.

to repay a single of her wails."

Indeed, he had not compensated for a single wail of his mother who endured risks and calamities for his sake. A person asked the holy Prophet (ṣ) to advise him of a good act. The holy Prophet (ṣ) told him, "Heed your mother." After repeating the same words three times, he said, "Heed your father."

The rights of our mothers can not be compensated no matter how much goodness we show them and no matter what services we render them.

Responsibility of a Child towards Islamic Laws

It is mandatory for a child who reaches the age of puberty to fulfill Islamic laws, such as acts of worship. But before this age Islamic laws are not incumbent upon youngsters. The age of maturity for boys is fifteen years and nine years for girls.

With this we conclude the discussion on the genesis of human beings, their childhood, and other related affairs.

HUMAN BEINGS:
HEALTH CARE

Islam has methodologically addressed issues of public healthcare, the chief method of protecting human life, in an effective and careful manner.

Most of the rules established by Islam are to protect Muslims against disease, basing the study of medicine first and foremost on prevention rather than healing. Before discussing these issues, let's consider several related matters.

The Focus of the Infallibles (ʿa) on Medicine:

The holy Prophet (ṣ) and the great Imams (ʿa) have seriously dealt with the field of medicine, which is one of the bases for stable life, endeavoring greatly in making such issues widely known. The following are some Narrations in this respect.

1. Narrations of the Holy Prophet (ṣ):

a. The holy Prophet (ṣ) has commended medical sciences and has invited people to get specialized in it. Once, the holy Prophet (ṣ) was passing by people that were gathering round a person talking to them, everybody was saying something regarding said person. The holy Prophet (ṣ) asked the crowd who the person was.

"He is a great scholar! O holy Messenger of God", they replied.

The holy Prophet said, "He is a scholar in what field?"

"He knows about the wars of the Arabs."

Considering this area of knowledge to be undesirable, the holy Prophet (ṣ) declared, "This is not something useful for the person who knows it and does not harm someone who does not know it. Indeed, knowledge is just of two kinds: religious knowledge and knowledge concerning the body."[1]

Knowing the history of the occurrences and wars of Arabs that occurred during the Age of Ignorance does not benefit human beings because it is a knowledge that is not productive for thought and does not cause any progress in human life.

b. The holy Prophet (ṣ) has ordered people to refer to doctors in order to receive treatment when they get sick. He has said,

> Receive medical treatment because God has not sent down any disease except that He has sent a cure for it too. Indeed, it is only death that has no cure.[2]

c. The holy Prophet (ṣ) considered the greatest blessing that is bestowed upon human beings to be health. He has stated,

After certainty (in belief of Almighty God), the best thing granted to any person is good health.[3]

The holy Prophet has placed tremendous importance on medical science. As an example for this we can refer to the general program known as "Prophetic Medicine" in which the holy Prophet (ṣ) has defined some illnesses and their treatments. This program also includes the specifications and benefits of some foods, fruits, and meats.

2. The Commander of the Faithful, Imam Alī (ʿa):

The Commander of the Faithful (ʿa), the great man of the ummah, the leader of the Islamic civilization and its intellectual development, has given instructions that if implemented will

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1– *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 1, p. 220.
2– *Da'ā'im al-Islām*, vol. 2, p. 143.
3– *Kanz al-Umamal*, vol. 3, p. 345; also *Musnad Ahmad ibn Ḥanbal*, vol. 1, p. 7.

prevent sickness and free people from need of doctors.

He (ʿa) has said to his Immaculate son, Imam Ḥasan, the leader of the youth in paradise, "O son, shall I teach you four points that will make you unneedful of medical treatment?"

Imam Ḥasan (ʿa) quickly replied, "Yes, O Commander of the Faithful."

"Do not eat until you are hungry, stop eating before you are full, chew your food very well, and do not sleep until you use the toilet. If you put these into practice, you will not need medical treatment."[1]

This is a golden prescription, one of the most splendid medical recommendations that modern medicine has proven because overeating and not chewing food well are among the factors that lead to digestive disorders as well as many other harmful illnesses that cause suffering to human beings.

The following are among the recommendations of Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) to Kumayl ibn Ziyād in this regard:

> O Kumayl! Do not fill your stomach with various types of food; rather keep some space for water and some space for air.
>
> O Kumayl! Before eating, speak the name of the God in whose name no disease causes harm. He is the cure for all diseases.
>
> O Kumayl! Truly, the health of the body comes from less eating of food and less drinking of water.[2]

3. Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa)

According to Jāḥiẓ, Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) has filled the world with his knowledge and has enriched Islamic thought with his God-given knowledge and genius. He had four thousand students in

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1– *Khisāl al-Saduq*, pp. 228229; also *Wasā'il ash-Shī'ah*, vol. 16, p. 409.

2– *Mustadrak al-Wasā'il*, vol. 16, p. 219.

his university[1] where he taught various sciences including medical science. He taught the medical sciences in detail including the functions of different parts of the body, blood circulation, and some microbes that cause diseases.[2] He has also lectured on the benefits of foods including fruits, vegetables, and meats. His discussions were published in a book titled *Tib al-Imām Ṣādiq* (ʿa) (The Medicine of Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa)) with commentary by Allāmah Sheikh Muḥammad Khalīlī.

It is worthy of note that Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) has debated with the famous medical scientists of his time and has entered into the subtlest of medical discussions with them. They were incapable of debating with him on the same level and have confirmed that he was more knowledgeable than them and that they were not acquainted with the details of this field.[3]

The holy Imam (ʿa) has disclosed the functions of different parts of the body that modern scientists are yet to discover with all their laboratories and research. What is certain is that his discussions had a significant effect in the progress of the medical sciences. For example Jābir ibn Ḥayyān, the honor of the east, has written a book entitled *As-Sumūm* regarding issues he learned from his master, Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa). This book is considered to be the first medical book discussing the characteristics of poisons.

Overeating

Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) has enjoined us against excess of eating:

1– I have included profiles of 3563 of Imam Ñādiq's students in *Mausū'at al-Imām aÒ-Ñādiq (ʿa)*.

2– Imam Ñādiq (*ʿa*), as defined by the western scholars. They have also mentioned his entire knowledge and his specialty in medical treatment.

3– I have referred to these amazing issues in the second part of my book entitled *The Life of Imam Ñādiq (ʿa)*.

> Overeating is the cause of all illnesses.[1]

Eating while Walking

One of the eating protocols in Islam is the prohibition of eating while walking. It is reported from Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) that:

> Do not eat while you are walking unless absolutely necessary.[2]

Imam Riḍā (ʿa) and Risalah Adh-Dhahabiyyah (The Golden Treatise)

Imam Riḍā (ʿa) is a miracle of Islam for his God given talent and genius. He was an expert in all sciences and knowledge. He was unique in his knowledge and no scholar of the Golden Age knew more than him. One of these sciences is medicine. In the presence of Imam Riḍā (ʿa), Ma'mūn, one of the Abbasid Caliphs, asked Jibrīl ibn Bakhtshūʿ, the greatest physician of the Abbasid era, to write a book on health care to serve as standard for public health. Jibrīl answered, "You gave me this assignment while Imam Riḍā (ʿa) is the father of medical sciences, the greatest of all physicians, and superior to all scientists." Therefore Ma'mūn tendered his request to Imam Riḍā (ʿa) and the holy Imam accepted. Thus, the holy Imam wrote a treatise on medicine that is one of the most distinctive books written in this field despite its briefness. Ma'mūn ordered this book to be written in gold ink and gave it the title *Risalat Adh-dhabiyyah fi aṭ-Ṓib* (The Golden Treatise on Medicine). Ma'mūn greatly treasured and praised it. It is written within it that:

"I named it golden and after the family of Hāshim and their children made copies of it, I placed it in the treasury of al-Ḥikmah (i.e. The House of Wisdom; the most important library and school of the time) because by management of food the body will become immunized, with the health of the body

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1– *Wasā'il ash-Shī'ah*, vol. 16, p. 411.
2– *Ibid*, p. 421.

diseases will be repelled, and with the repellence of disease life will continue, and with life wisdom is obtained, and with wisdom life is obtained.

"This treatise should be saved and be made accessible to people in order to get advice. It is a valid scientific source to serve as reference because it comes from the people that continually advise of the wisdom of the chosen Messenger, Muḥammad (ṣ), the Narrations of the holy Prophets (ʿa), the guidance of Imams (ʿa), the recommendations of the scientists, and the cure for hearts (i.e. mind and soul) and physical diseases.

"I presented this book to scientists and doctors and some authors of intellect and thought, men of knowledge and wisdom, they all valued and praised it and rated it with the highest of ranks in order to be fair to the author and have confirmed all the points mentioned in the book."[1]

Imam Riḍā (ʿa) has debated with groups of the great physicians of his time that were assigned by Ma'mūn to debate with him. Ma'mūn promised them huge sums of money if the Imam was unable to answer their questions. Ma'mūn would have used this to make the Imam disreputable and to lower his social status but they were unable to contest with Imam and confirmed the Imam's skill and superiority in the field and some even surrendered to his Imamate.

In any case, Islam has defined plans and programs for public health which prevent human beings from being affected with many sicknesses.

Commendation of Islam by Western Physicians

Western scientists are amazed by the Islamic rules in medicine and have commended the holy Prophet's (ṣ) skill and efforts in public health care. Some of these physicians are as follows:

1– *Tib al-Imām al-RiÃā ('a)*; I have written its commentary based on modern science.

1. Dr. Jorjodar Balano

He holds that Islamic obligatory and recommended duties are related to health and aim at two objectives: a religious objective and a health objective.[1]

2. Dr. San Jon Jir

He believes there is no doubt that treatment and health are the main issues the Prophet has considered. He himself had excessive knowledge in medicine.[2]

3- Dr. Rona Sandej

Dr. Sandej has commended Islamic teachings especially in the field of health care. According to this doctor, Islamic religious teachings are models for healthcare. These teachings have called for contentment and enjoin people against excess in eating and in drinking. It has also called for cleanliness and purification with water five times a day before every prayer. Prayer is a collection of physical training. Islam has also ordered some people that suffer from stomach related illnesses to separate themselves from others. In fact, many Islamic sciences are on issues of health care.[3]

In any case, Islam has defined a series of general methods for healthcare that prevent human beings from contracting diseases. We will discuss them in brief as follows:

Cleanliness

Cleanliness is one of the important components in healthy life and immunization against contagious diseases and deadly cholera. Islam has effectively defined this component. Indeed, we shall take a look at some verses of holy Qur'ān regarding this.

1– *Al-Wajīz*, vol. 1, p. 2.
2– *Ibid*, pp. 2-3.
3– *Ibid*, p. 3.

Cleanliness according to the Holy Qur'ān

Almighty God has granted His love to those who clean themselves. The Most High has said:

إِنَّ اللّهَ يُحِبُّ التَّوَّابِينَ وَيُحِبُّ الْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ

Indeed Allah loves the penitent and He loves those who keep clean.[1]

He has also said:

فِيهِ رِجَالٌ يُحِبُّونَ أَن يَتَطَهَّرُواْ وَاللّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُطَّهِّرِينَ

...Therein are men who love to keep pure, and Allah loves those who keep pure.[2]

Is there anything better and more splendid than love by Almighty Allah?

Cleanliness according to the Tradition of the Infallibles

There are Narrations that have encouraged Muslims to be clean. Some of these Narrations are as follows:

1. The holy Prophet (ṣ) has said:

   Cleanliness is part of faith.[3]

2. The holy Prophet (*ṣ* has said:

   Almighty God is pure and likes purity. Also, He is clean and likes cleanliness.[4]

3. The holy Prophet (ṣ) has said:

   Try your best to make yourself clean because Almighty God has built Islam on the foundation of

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1– *Surah Baqarah* 2:222.
2– *Surah Tawbah* 9:108.
3– *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 59, p. 291.
4– *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, vol. 4, p. 198.

cleanliness.[1]

4. Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) has said:

> Purity is half of faith.[2]

The aforementioned Narrations are among the Narrations that encourage cleanliness and consider it a basic principle in the life of a Muslim.

The Nature of Cleanliness:

The nature of cleanliness, which according to Narrations is half of faith, is as follows:

1. Cleanliness of the body and washing off dirtiness, cutting the fingernails, brushing the teeth and cutting the hair.

The holy Prophet (ṣ) has said:

> Comb your beard and cut your nails because devils[3] gather between the flesh and nails.[4]

2. Cleanliness of clothes and washing off dirtiness and insects that carry diseases.

The holy Prophet (ṣ) has said:

> Wash your cloths and have your hair cut, brush your teeth, and beautify yourself with ornaments and be clean.[5]

3. Cleanliness of the house and removal of dirt and cleanliness of bathrooms.

The holy Prophet (ṣ) has said:

> Almighty God is pure and likes purity, He is clean and

1– *Kanz al-'ummāl*, vol. 9, p. 277.
2– *Mustadrak al-Wasā'il* vol. 1 p. 357.
3– In many narrations, the word shaytān (i.e. devil, Satan) seems to indicate germs; that is, life forms that cause disease. [ed.]
4– *Kanz al-'Ummāl*, vol. 9, p. 301.
5– *Ibid*, vol. 6, p. 640.

> likes cleanliness, He is generous and likes generosity, and He is bountiful and likes openhandedness, so clean your yards and do not imitate the Jews.[1]

4. Cleanliness of food including vegetables, fruits and other edibles.

5. Cleanliness and sterilization of drinking water.

6. Cleanliness of streets and alleys and removal of dirtiness.

7. Abstaining from sitting in dirty places.

8. Abstaining from spitting in public places.

Islam has established the life of the people on the basis of health, which is one of the necessities of life. By considering the following decrees, the dedication of Islam to matters of health and training become clear:

First: Greater Ritual Ablution (Ghusl)

Islam has made complete washing of the body with water obligatory in the following cases:

*1. Ritual Impurity (jināb*ah)

Impurity happens in both women and men after having sexual intercourse or a wet dream. God the Most High has stated:

وَإِن كُنتُمْ جُنُبًا فَاطَّهَّرُواْ

If you are junub[2]*, purify yourselves.*[3]

It has been proved in modern medicine that after sexual intercourse the human body loses some vitality and cannot regain it except through washing and bathing.

2. Menstruation (ḥayḍ)

Menstruation is a period of bleeding in women. After

1– *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, vol. 4, p. 197.
2– Junub is the state of ritual impurity. [ed.]
3– *Surah Mā'idah* 5:6.

menstruation, ritual ablution and washing and removal of dirtiness is obligatory for women. With ablution and washing, a woman regains the vitality and strength that she loses during her menstruation.

3. Irregular Bleeding (istiḥaḍah)
A woman needs to perform ritual ablution once a day in case she has a medium amount of irregular bleeding. However, in cases of considerable irregular bleeding, the woman must perform ritual ablution three times a day for prayer. Islamic laws relating to this issue have been explained in detail in books of jurisprudence (i.e. the practical laws of Islam).

4. Bleeding after Childbirth (nifās)
Nifās is the blood that is discharged from the womb during or after the delivery of a child. It is obligatory for a woman to perform ritual ablution after the stoppage of the blood.

5. Touching a Human Corpse
It is obligatory for a person who has touched a cooled off corpse before the completion of the Ritual Ablution of the Dead [*ghusl mayyit*] to perform a ritual ablution. There is no difference in religious law whether the corpse belongs to a Muslim or to an unbeliever or whether the dead was young or old.

The aforementioned cases are the obligatory ritual ablutions in which the body is cleansed of all dirtiness.

Recommended Greater Ablutions (ghusl mustaḥabb)
There are many types of recommended greater ablution in Islam. Some of them are as follows:

1. Friday Ablution

2. Ablution on the day of Eid Fitr and Eid Adh'hā.

3. Ablution before wearing holy cloth of circumambulation [*iḥrām*].

4. Ablution on the day of ʿArafah.

5. Ablution on the days of Tarwiyah

6. Ablution on the holy day of Ghadīr

7. Ablution on the 15th of the holy month of Shaʿbān.[1]

8. Ablution for visiting the holy infallible Imams (ʿa).[2]

These are some of the recommended greater ritual ablutions that are aimed at soundness of health and cleaning of the body from dirt and contamination.

Second: Ablution (wuḍū')

The holy Prophet of God (ṣ) has said:

> Ablution is half of faith.[3]

Ablution is obligatory as an introductory step for the fivefold daily prayers and other obligatory prayers with the exception of burial prayer *(ṣalāt mayyit).*

According to the Shiʿah, washing the whole face and the hands from the elbow downward and wiping the head and the top of the two feet are obligatory in wuḍū'.

The recommended acts in ablution include but are not limited to washing the hands at the beginning of the ablution, rinsing the mouth with water, drawing water in through the nose.

The Benefits of Ablution (wuḍū')

Physicians have mentioned many benefits for ablution, some of which are as follows:

1. The water poured on the face and hands will make the facial skin capillaries contract and re-expand. This increases the heart rate and metabolic processes. It also strengthens breathing and

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1– The birthday of Imam of the Age (may our souls be sacrificed for him).

2– *Minhāj aÒ-Ñāliḥīn*; the chapter of worship by the grand Ayatullah Sayyid ʿAlī Husaynī Sīstānī.

3– *Mustadrak al-Wasā'il*, vol. 1, p. 364.

increases the inhalation of oxygen and exhalation of carbon dioxide. In this way the nervous system awakens and this awakening influences all the nerves in the heart, lungs, stomach, and glands.

2. It serves as protection of the eyes from soreness because they are washed by water several times a day.

3. Cleaning the nasal cavities from microbes that settle therein; that is, if the worshipper performs the act of drawing water into the nose during the ablution.

4. Protecting the skin against disease because the face and hands are uncovered and therefore exposed to epidemic diseases. If washed several times a day the skin will be able to resist microbes.

5. It protects the stomach from the microbes entering it via the mouth. Indeed, microbes find their way into the body through dirty hands. Therefore, if the hands are washed and are continuously clean, they will not carry any microbes into the body.

Diseases that may enter the body through dirty hands are as follows:

a. Digestive parasites

b. Typhoid fever

c. Paralysis

Ablution is one of the important methods of protecting the body against dangerous diseases.

6. Reduction of stress that according to the doctors affects the nervous system due to anger. The holy Prophet (ṣ) has said:

> Truly, anger comes from Satan and Satan from fire. Fire is only quenched by water; so if any of you are in

a state of anger, they should perform ablution.[1]

The aforementioned points are some important benefits of ablution.[2]

Third: Brushing the Teeth

One of the methods of good health recommended by Islam is brushing the teeth. This is because of the active role the teeth have in the health of the body. Islam stresses the importance of brushing the teeth with chewing sticks (*miswāk*). The holy Prophet (ṣ) has said:

> If not that I deem it difficult for my nation, I would have ordered them to brush their teeth in the ablution for every prayer.[3]

He (ṣ) has also said:

> Brush your teeth because brushing is good as it strengthens the gums, removes the unpleasant odor of the mouth and keeps the stomach healthy.[4]

He (ṣ) has also said:

> Brushing of the teeth has eight benefits: It gives good aroma to the mouth. It strengthens the gums. It is good for eyesight. It prevents phlegm. It makes the angels happy. It pleases Almighty God. It amplifies ones good deeds and it keeps the stomach healthy.[5]

He has emphasized brushing of the teeth with chewing sticks because they have many benefits and work better than toothpaste. Dr. Ḥāmid al-Badrī has enumerated some of its medical benefits. He has said that the tree of Arak (also known

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1– *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 7, p. 272; also *Sunan Abu Dāwūd*, vol. 2, p. 434.
2– *Rūḥ ad-Dīn al-Islāmī*, p. 400; *Rūḥ aÒ-Ñalāt fī al-Islām*, pp. 8283; and *An-Niẓām aÔ-Óarbawī fī al-Islām*, p. 310.
3– *Wasā'il ash-Shī'ah*, vol. 2, p. 17.
4– *Kanz al-'Ummāl*, vol. 9, p. 314.
5– *Ibid*, p. 315.

as the salvadora persica tree) is composed of cellulose tissues, some volatile fats, scented white resin and minerals; the most important of which are sodium chloride, i.e. edible salt, potassium chloride, and oxalates.

Therefore, the Arak tree is a natural toothbrush rich in minerals and scented matter and makes the teeth clean. The holy Prophet (ṣ) and his companions were using this natural toothbrush to brush their teeth while the modern toothbrush came into use around AD 1800.

Indeed, if human beings do not take care of their teeth they will decay causing the formation of poisons that are absorbed by the body and cause a lot of diseases.[1]

These are some of the important benefits of the miswāk due to which Islam has enacted the law of brushing teeth with this special plant.

Fourth: Washing the Excretory Organs

One of the health methods of paramount importance in Islam is washing of the urinary organ two times with water or preferably three times. As for the anus, duty-bound persons can either wash it with water or clean it with a stone or any other thing that can be used in completely cleansing all impurities.[2]

This is a great order that has an active role in human health and protection against disease. It must be noted that the Arabs of the Age of Ignorance did not clean themselves at all, neither with water nor anything else, which is why they smelled offensive all the time.

Once, a perfume was given to a person that was about to marry. He started using the perfume on his private parts whereby he was told that those parts of body are not to be perfumed! He replied: “I have to do so because the foul odor is killing me.”

1– *Rūḥ ad-Dīn al-Islāmī*, p. 401.
2– *Minhaj aÒ-Ñāliḥīn*, vol. 1, p. 31.

Fifth: Shortening the Hair and Cutting the Nails

Islam has recommended the cleaning of all parts of the body. In this respect, it encourages us to shorten our hair and to cut our nails. It was reported in a narration that:

> Five things are human nature: shaving the hairs of the private parts, circumcision, shortening one's mustache, shaving the armpit, and cutting the nails.[1]

It is certain that implementing these methods upon the body cause sound health and freedom from disease.

In short, the cleanliness proposed Islam promotes public health and serves as preventive medicine. It is, in fact, what the developed countries and world health organizations are trying to promote among nations. In addition, cleanliness protects human beings from deviation and corruption.

According to the Englishman Bentham

Whoever constantly practices purification according to the religion of Islam is outwardly free from sin and is inwardly free from defects. I studied the criminals in prisons and found nothing but impurity of the body and dirty clothes in them.[2]

Here we conclude the discussion regarding Islamic public healthcare.

Sports

Exercise is one of the important factors for refreshing and giving vitality to the body. Sports are of different types:

1. Racing

Racing was permitted by Islamic laws during its early stages because it helped make people ready for battle. We have a number of Narrations regarding its permissibility from the holy Prophet (ṣ). He has said:

> Competition is not recommended except in shooting

1– *Saḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 7, p. 56.
2– *Niẓām at-Tarbawī fī al-Islām*, p. 312.

of arrows, horse riding, or camel riding.[1]

Racing is one of the methods that makes the body strong and enables growth of the muscles. Muslim jurists have taken this issue into consideration and have allocated separate chapters to this topic in Islamic books of law wherein they have addressed it in detail.

Nowadays, car racing is considered to be part of public sports.

2. Shooting

By this we mean the exercise for fighting. In olden days, shooting was preformed with bows and arrows but now it is carried out with planes, missiles, tanks, and other types of weaponry.

This type of exercise requires military information and provides power to the body and activeness to the muscles.

3. Hunting

Hunting also strengthens the body because it requires running and quick jumping which are elements of physical exercise. The Muslim caliphs at the beginning of Islam were enjoyed hunting but their inducement was nothing except pleasure and wasting time. Jurisprudential sources have explained in detail the Islamic laws concerning the prohibited and the permitted types of hunting in Islam.

Physical Benefits from the Act of Prayer (ṣalāt)

Prayer is the most important act of worship in Islam and it has some physical benefits for the human body. In fact, some doctors have also mentioned this truth:

1. Dr. Mostafā al-Haffār

Professor Afīf ʿAbdul-Fattāh Óabārah has inquired from Dr. Mostafa Haffar (a specialist in digestive diseases) about the benefits of bowing down *(rukū')* and prostration *(sujūd)* in

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1– *Al-RauÃah* (*fī Sharḥ al-Lum'at al-Damashqiyyah*) vol. 4, p. 421; the Najaf university edition.

prayer to which he replied:

Bowing strengthens the muscles of the stomach and as a result the stomach becomes small and its digestive function works properly. Also, it enables the intestine to send out extra matter naturally. As for prostration, it sends out the air from the stomach through the mouth releasing built up pressure and mitigating digestive problems and the resulting reactions of the heart.[1]

2- Dr. Faris Ghāzūrī

Dr. Faris, a neurologist and a specialist in joint problems, is of the opinion that the act of prayer has healthy benefits for the body:

Prayer and its components such as bowing and prostration strengthen the muscles of the back and soften the movements of the spinal column. These benefits will be more obvious especially if a person prays from the beginning of his life. The other benefit is immunity against diseases caused by weakness of the muscles around the spinal column, a situation that may lead to different types of nervous illnesses, severe pains, and muscle spasms.[2]

These are some of the benefits that ritual prayer may cause in worshippers. In addition to its physical benefits, praying has other benefits such as spiritual exercise and the connection between the worshiper and the Great Creator, Master of the entire world.

The Benefits of Fasting (ṣaūm) on Human Health

Fasting is one of the acts of worship that plays an important role in the good health of the body. It is one of the most important recommendations for the following illnesses:

1– *Niẓām at-Tarbawī fī al-Islām*, p. 335.
2– *Rūḥ aÒ-Ñalāt fī al-Islām*, p. 137.

1. Intestinal Spasms

Fasting is the best treatment for chronic intestinal spasms that is caused by fermentation of starchy and diluted substances.

2. Overweight

Obesity is caused by excessive eating coupled with little physical exercise. Fasting is the most effective way for losing weight.

3. High Blood Pressure

High blood pressure is caused by psychological problems and excessive pleasure. Fasting is the best treatment for this problem.

4. Diabetes

Fasting is the best treatment for diabetes especially for those who are affected with overweight. Before insulin was discovered, the only way to treat this illness was through fasting.

5. Nephritis

Fasting is very effective as a treatment for nephritis.

6- Cardiac Illnesses

7- Chronic Inflammation of Joints

According to some physicians, the aforementioned illnesses are curable through fasting.[1]

It is said in a narration that:

> Fast to be healthy.[2]

It is said in another narration that:

> There is a *zakāt* [prescribed tax] for everything and the *zakāt* of the body is fasting.[3]

1– *Al-Islām wa Óib al-Íadīth*, pp. 3336.
2– *Mustadrak al-Wasā'il*, vol. 7, p. 502.
3– *Man lā Yahduruh al-Faqīh*, vol. 4, p. 416.

Fasting is not only the best treatment for various types of illnesses but also a mental treatment for the soul. Those that are accustomed to it are patient in addition to the fact that it strengthens the will.

Resting

One of the ways to stay healthy in Islam is taking a rest after hard work and getting tired of worldly affairs. Human beings should not cause themselves torment and should not work more than their ability because this may result in self-destruction. That is part of what Islam has prohibited.

It is said in narration that:

> Your soul has a right upon you; your body has a right upon you; your wife has a right upon you; and your eyes have a right upon you.

And in another narration it is said that:

> Your soul is like a mount, so be lenient with it.

That is you should not employ and engage your soul more than its ability and you should treat it well.

Verily, resting protects human beings from affliction with many diseases that are caused by hard work, pressure, and imbalanced behavior.

Here, we conclude the discussion on health care in Islam and we shall discuss other relative issues in the next chapter.

FOOD AND BEVERAGE

Islam places great importance on food and beverages since we cannot survive without them. In this respect, Islam has cast light onto all types of foods and beverages and also called for moderateness and refraining from squandering them. It has permitted consummation of some foods and drinks and has prohibited that of others. The discussion in this respect is connected with the body's health however we have given it a separate chapter due to it's importance.

Food

Food is an active factor in human life and Islam has devoted considerable and comprehensive attention to it. It has defined a specific method entailing much good for humans. Some of those methods are as follows:

Moderateness in Eating

Islam lays emphasis on moderate eating and warns us about extravagancy. These emphases come in both the holy Qur'ān and in the tradition of the holy Prophet (ṣ).

Moderateness in the Holy Qur'ān

The holy Qur'ān enjoins humans to be moderate and not squander while eating.

God the Most High has said:

يَا بَنِي آدَمَ خُذُواْ زِينَتَكُمْ عِندَ كُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ وكُلُواْ وَاشْرَبُواْ وَلاَ تُسْرِفُواْ إِنَّهُ لاَ يُحِبُّ الْمُسْرِفِينَ

O Children of Adam! Put on your adornment on every occasion of prayer, and eat and drink, but do not waste; indeed He does not like the wasteful.[1]

All the factors of health are pointed out in this verse, since all types of extravagancy are prohibited in the verse, whether in eating, drinking or in sexual relations that all are extremely harmful to our body.

Indeed general principle has been introduced in this holy verse in order to keep the body immune from illnesses, which is to be moderate in eating and in other issues.

Moderateness in Tradition

There are a number of Narrations quoted from the holy Prophet (ṣ) and the pure Imams (ʿa), in which squandering has been prohibited. Some of these Narrations are as follows:

Narrations from the Holy Prophet (ṣ)

The holy Prophet (ṣ) has called upon his followers to be moderate in eating and drinking:

1- The holy Messenger of God (ṣ) has said:

> Human beings always try to fill their stomach, and keep counting their bites, while these bites must be divided into three, one for their nutrition, one for their drinking, and one [to forgo] for their health.[2]

2- The holy Prophet (ṣ) has said:

> Eat while having an appetite and stop eating while the appetite is still there.[3]

3- The holy Prophet (ṣ) has said:

> Your stomach is a place for pain and your diet is the cause of all illnesses; therefore, give your body

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1– *Surah A'rāf* 7:31.
2– *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 73, p. 91.
3– *Mustadrak al-Wasā'il*, vol. 10, p. 155.

whatever you have made it accustomed to.[1]

Notice the considerable attention the holy Prophet (ṣ) has devoted to food and how he has enjoined people against overeating and extravagance so that humans can be protected from disease and illness?

It is worth mentioning that once Najāshi (Negus), an Egyptian king, sent some gifts to the holy Prophet (ṣ) including a physician in order to treat the illnesses of the Muslims but the holy Prophet sent the physician back and said:

> We Muslims never become ill because we do not eat unless we are hungry and we stop eating while the appetite is still there.[2]

Narrations from Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa)

Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) is a great leader of the Islamic nation. He is also the leader of the Islamic scientific movement. He has said:

> If people are moderate in eating, their bodies will be more resistant.[3]

Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) has also said:

> People are closest to God when their bellies are empty and farthest from Him when they are full.[4]

Narrations from Imam Riḍā (ʿa)

In his book, *Risālat adh-Dhahabiyyah*, which was written upon the request of Ma'mūn, Imam Riḍā (ʿa) has said:

> Look for what is compatible with you and with your stomach and makes your body stronger. Choose the type of food that your body needs most and prepare your meals with that type of food.

1– *An-Niẓām at-Tarbawī fi al-Islām*, p. 314.
2– *As-Sīrat an-Nabawiyyah* by Zaynī Daḥlān, vol. 3, p. 72.
3– *An-Niẓām at-Tarbawī fi al-Islām*, p. 313.
4– *Wasā'il ash-Shī'ah*, vol. 24, p. 239.

He has also stated:

> Whoever eats an excess of food, it shall not benefit him but persons who eat sufficiently, no more and no less, shall benefit from their meals. The same applies to water as well. It is good to eat sufficiently and to refrain from eating while you still have an appetite since it is better for your stomach, your body, and it makes your brain sharper and your body lighter.[1]

Serious Harms

Excess in eating entails many serious health problems and causes many diseases, some of which are as follows:

1. Obesity

Excess in eating results in fatness which is one of the most dangerous of illnesses and exposes humans to many diseases such as heart disease, high blood pressure, kidney malfunction, diabetes, and so on.

2. Digestive Disorders

Excess eating leads to many diseases in the human digestive system such as:

a. Stomach enlargement,

b. peptic ulcers, and

c. colon disease.

3. Decrease in Procreation

One of the problems caused by excess eating is decrease of procreation. It has been established in modern medicine that eating oily foods affects a person's potency and reproductive system and may sometimes lead to infertility.[2]

4. Becoming Dull-witted

One of the harms caused by excess eating is becoming dull-

1– *Óib Imam al-RiÃā' ('a)*, p. 47.
2– *Tabībuka Ma'ak*, p. 31.

witted, absent-minded, and vapid.[1]

How to Eat?

Islam teaches us how to eat. The following instructions have to be followed in this regard:

1. Chewing Food

Islam orders us to chew food and considers this to be a way to guarantee health and freedom from doctors. Recent and modern medical researches indicate that not chewing food completely causes many diseases of the digestive system.

2. Cool Food

Islam prohibits us from eating hot food and emphasizes the necessity for eating cool food. The holy Prophet (ṣ) has said:

> Let your food cool since there is no benefit in hot food.[2]

He (ṣ) has also said:

> Let your food cool in order for Allah to send benefits down upon it.[3]

Doctors have established that eating hot foods leads to teeth diseases and other illnesses.

3. Eating Despite Being Full

Islam prohibits eating after getting full. Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) has enjoins us against this:

> Eating after satiety causes leprosy.[4]

Prohibited Foods (ḥarām)

Islam prohibits eating some foods because they endanger our health and cause damage to our body. Islam has made it incumbent upon us to eat clean foods because they contain

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1– *An-Niẓām at-Tarbawī fī al-Islām*, p. 314.
2– *Niẓām at-Tarbawī fī al-Islām*, p. 315.
3– *Ibid*.
4– *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 6, p. 269.

healthy ingredients that do not adversely affect the body rather causing benefits and increasing the resistance of the body. This is reflected in the following verses:

1- God the Most High has said:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُواْ كُلُواْ مِن طَيِّبَاتِ مَا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ وَاشْكُرُواْ لِلّهِ إِن كُنتُمْ إِيَّاهُ تَعْبُدُونَ

O you who have faith! Eat of the lawful things that We have provided you with, and be grateful to Allah, if it is indeed He Whom you worship.[1]

2. God the Most High has said:

حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَيْتَةُ وَالْدَّمُ وَلَحْمُ الْخِنْزِيرِ وَمَا أُهِلَّ لِغَيْرِ اللّهِ بِهِ وَالْمُنْخَنِقَةُ وَالْمَوْقُوذَةُ وَالْمُتَرَدِّيَةُ وَالنَّطِيحَةُ وَمَا أَكَلَ السَّبُعُ إِلاَّ مَا ذَكَّيْتُمْ وَمَا ذُبِحَ عَلَى النُّصُبِ

You are prohibited carrion, blood, the flesh of swine, and what has been offered to other than Allah, and the animal strangled or beaten to death, and that which dies by falling or is gored to death, and that which is mangled by a beast of prey– barring that which you may purify– and what is sacrificed on stone altars [to idols]...[2]

Here we will briefly discuss the harm caused to our bodies by eating such prohibited foods base on medical and other sources.

1. Carcass

An animal carcass is the body of an animal that died without *dhebḥ*; that is, the Islamic method of slaughtering. Carcasses are of two types:

First: The carcass of an animal that died out of illness. The

1– *Surah Baqarah* 2:172.
2– *Surah Mā'idah* 5:3.

harm of this type of carcass to the body has been mentioned by doctors as follows:

Naturally the death of an animal has a cause. If the animal dies due to illness, there is no doubt that there are harmful particles that will remain in its body which are harmful to humans even if the meat is sterilized and its microbes are killed with fire. Such carcasses are like fermented food that is harmful to the body no matter how it has been sterilized and may even cause the death of whoever eats it.[1]

A carcass lacks all the nutritious elements of food that the body needs. If someone eats a carcass immediately after the death of the animal, they will be afflicted with stomach spasms and acute intestinal obstruction but if the carcass is eaten a long time after the death or after it has become rotten, it will become a deadly poison that inflicts the body with irremediable harm such as sudden paralysis or death and it may sometime cause infertility.[2]

Islam has prohibited the eating of carcasses in order to safeguard the body from such damages.

Second: If the cause of death is due old age its harmfulness is similar to animal that dies due to illness since old age disintegrates the body tissues which in turn makes some changes in the meat causing decrease in its dietary value and digestibility and leading to various types of diseases.

2. Pork

Pork is among the worst types of foods for the human body. It afflicts the human body with trichinosis, a dangerous disease that is accompanied by severe diarrhea, or even dysentery, spasms, high fever, weakness and intense pain in the joints, dried throat, pain in the respiratory organs, swelling of the face especially around the eyes, weakness of the sight, and may

1– *Islam wa aÔ-Óib al-Íadīth*, p. 17.
2– *Niẓām at-Tarbawī fī al-Islām*, p. 316.

eventually lead to death.[1]

James Paget, a British physician, discovered this dangerous disease while witnessing an autopsy on the body of a man who excessively consumed pork. After the conduction of many tests, it was found that the disease is caused by a worm called trichina that lives inside the intestine of some mammals such as mice, rats, dogs and pigs though it extensively propagates in pigs especially those that consum carcasses of animals with parasites. If human beings consume the pork that was afflicted with this disease, great quantities of the cysts containing the disease agent will inevitably enter their stomachs and after a while worms will break out of the cysts and spread throughout the body eventually causing the aforementioned disease.[2]

It must be noted that this disease only exists in western countries where consumption of pork is very popular and permitted. *Bennie Dickson* has said that affliction with this disease is prevalent in France, Germany, England and Italy while it is rare in eastern countries due to the Islamic ban of consumption of pork.[3]

Some physicians have referred to many dangerous issues in consuming pork, some of which are as follows:

1. It is impossible to prove that a pig is not afflicted with this type of worm except if all its organs are tested under a microscope which is not feasible for all pork meat.

2. A female worm lays around 1500 larvae inside the mucous membrane of the intestine, consequently millions of these larvae enter the blood circulation and spread all over the body. Then they congregate in the muscles which will cause exquisite pain and inflammation in muscles.

1– *Ibid*.
2– *Al-Qur'ān wa aÔ-Óib al-Íadīth*, p. 76.
3– *Niẓām at-Tarbawī fī al-Islām*, pp. 340341.

3. This disease has no cure and its medicine is yet to be discovered. Consuming pork may afflict the consumer with some infectious microbes that cause acute poisoning accompanied by intense inflammation in the digestive system that sometimes leads to death in very few hours…[1]

The severe harms listed above caused by pork serve as a proof for the profundity and verity of Islamic law for announcing the prohibition of consumption of pork.

3. Strangled Animals:

Among the types of meat Islam has prohibited is the meat of a strangled animal, i.e. an animal that dies by suffocation, since suffocation spoils the meat immediately; its color becomes almost black and starts reeking. This is why Islam has prohibited it.

4. An Animal Beaten to Death:

Such an animal cannot be consumed since its meat is like that of a suffocated animal.

5. An Animal that has Died as a Result of Falling from a High Place

This type of meat is not good for consumption; the meat of such animals spoils and turns black.

6. An Animal that is Gored to Death

That is, animals which are killed by another animal. The meat of such animals is not good for consumption because it blackens and spoils.

7. An Animal Half-eaten by Wild Animals

Among the types of meat that is prohibited in Islam is the animal that is torn apart by a wild animal. This may be because hunting animals usually eat carcasses which contains deadly microbes and transfers such microbes to its prey. As a result, the meat may become infected and consuming it may be

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1– *Rūḥ ad-Dīn al-Islāmī*, p. 405.

harmful to human body.

These are some of the meats prohibited by Islam. Additionally, there are other types of meat like the meat of dogs, snakes, and some types of birds and fish that are prohibited by Islam.

There is no doubt that the prohibition of such meats was imposed out of wisdom and for good reason since Almighty God allows us to consume various types of food that are not detrimental to the body.

Beverages

The consumption of some beverages are allowed by Islam while others are prohibited due to their harmfulness to the body.

Water

Water is the source of life and without it the entire creation could have been annihilated. Water is one of the greatest gifts Almighty God has bestowed upon His servants. Now let us take a look at some Narrations reported in this respect:

The Importance of Water

1. The holy Prophet (ṣ) has said:

> The supreme beverage in Paradise is water.[1]

2. The Commander of the Faithful, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) has said:

> Water is the most superior of beverages in this world and in the Hereafter.[2]

Water is not only superior to all other beverages in this world but also it is superior to other beverages in the Hereafter.

3. Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) has said:

> The taste of water is the taste of life.[3]

It is true that the taste of water is that of life, since without

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1– *Wasā'il ash-Shī'ah* vol. 25 p. 234.
2– *Ibid*, p. 233.
3– *Ibid*, p. 234.

water there would not even be any shadow in existence.

Enjoyment of Water

One should enjoy drinking water because it is the most important necessity of life. It has been narrated from Abu al-Ḥasan, Imam Riḍā (ʿa), that:

> Drinking cold water is more pleasant.[1]

In addition to that, Abu Abdullah, Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa), has said:

> Whosoever enjoys drinking water in this world, Allah shall make them enjoy the beverages of paradise.[2]

Sweetening the Mouth with Water

It is recommended to be satisfied with drinking water. Someone cited the following regarding Imam Ḥusain (ʿa):

The Imam asked for some dates then drank some water immediately after eating it. I said to him, “May my soul be sacrificed for you, why did you drink water?” He replied, "I only ate some dates in order to enjoy the water.”[3]

The Manner of Drinking Water:

Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) described how to drink water thus:

> Three breathing intervals when drinking water is better than drinking water without stop.[4]

Sulaymān ibn Khālid asked Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) about a person who drinks water without pause. He answered, “This is unacceptable because it is similar to the manner of how a thirsty camel drinks water“.[5]

Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) stated regarding Imam ʿAlī (ʿa):

> Once, he forbids the guzzling down of beverages: “A

1– *Ibid*, p. 235.
2– *Ibid*.
3– *Ibid*, p. 237.
4– *Ibid*, p. 246.
5– *Ibid*.

beverage must be consumed in two or three intervals."[1]

Supplication for Drinking Water

Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) quoted his ancestor, the holy Prophet (ṣ), as reciting the following supplication while drinking water:

> Praise be to Allah for the clear pleasant water He has provided us with, not sour bitter water, and has not admonished us for our sins.[2]

These are some Narrations related to water, its advantages, the manner of drinking it, and the supplication while drinking it.

Purity of Water:

Water is naturally pure in itself and purifies other things as well. Almighty God has said:

وَأَنزَلْنَا مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً طَهُورًا

And We send down from the sky purifying water.[3]

Water that is more than Kur (a unit) in volume is not affected by impurity if there is no change in its three features, i.e. color, taste, and smell. However, if changes occur to these three features, the water becomes impure and must not be consumed. But if the water is less than Kur and it is exposed to impurity, such as a drop of urine or blood, it is considered to have become impure. But it can be purified if it is connected with running water or other purifying agents listed by jurists.

In any case, water is a bounty from Almighty God upon His servants, and it is the best of all beverages.

Some other beverages have been prohibited by Islam due to the damage they inflict in our body. Those beverages include:

1– *Ibid*.
2 –*Wasā'il ash-Shī'ah*, vol. 25, p. 250.
3– *Surah Furqān* 25:48.

Wine

Wine is one of the filthiest and deadliest beverages prohibited by Islam. Here you shall hear some Narrations that show its prohibition. But before that we shall mention the Qur'ānic verse that has prohibited wine. Almighty God has said:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُواْ إِنَّمَا الْخَمْرُ وَالْمَيْسِرُ وَالأَنصَابُ وَالأَزْلاَمُ رِجْسٌ مِّنْ عَمَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ فَاجْتَنِبُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ

O you who have faith! Indeed wine, gambling, idols and the divining arrows are abominations of Satan's doing, so avoid them, so that you may be felicitous…[1]

What censure is greater than that of wine in this verse; that it is an abomination, the work of Satan and we must abstain from it? Below are a series of Narrations that have prohibited wine:

1. The holy Prophet (ṣ) has said:
   Three groups of people are not admitted to Paradise: drinkers of wine, magic users, and persons who have abandoned their relatives.[2]

2. Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) has said:
   A wine drinker is like an idolater since wine is the source of all sins. Those who drink it deny the Book of God Most High because they would have avoided all its prohibitions if they had believed in the book of God.[3]

3. Alī ibn Yaqṭīn reported that once in his presence Mahdī ʿAbbāsī asked Imam Mūsā ibn Jaʿfar (ʿa), "Has wine been prohibited in the Book of God; people believe it has been deprecated there and not prohibited?" Imam stood up and said: "Wine is forbidden in the Book of God." "Where has it been prohibited in the holy Qur'ān?" Imam gave reasons and pointed

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1– *Surah Mā'idah* 5:90.
2– *Wasā'il ash-Shī'ah*, vol. 17, p. 244.
3– *Ibid*, p. 256.

out some Qur'ānic verses:

قُلْ إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ رَبِّيَ الْفَوَاحِشَ مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطَنَ وَالإِثْمَ وَالْبَغْيَ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ

Say, 'My Lord has only forbidden indecencies, the outward among them and the inward ones, and sin and undue aggression...' [1]

As for the outward among them, manifest fornication is meant, and by sin, the drinking of wine. Almighty God has declared elsewhere:

يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ قُلْ فِيهِمَا إِثْمٌ كَبِيرٌ وَمَنَافِعُ لِلنَّاسِ وَإِثْمُهُمَآ أَكْبَرُ مِن نَّفْعِهِمَا

They ask you concerning wine and gambling. Say, 'There is a great sin in both of them, and some profits for the people, but their sinfulness outweighs their profit.' [2]

Sin [*ithm*] in the book of God refers to wine and gambling. They are greater sins just as Almighty Allah has stated in the holy Qur'ān.

Mahdī realized the truth and was surprised so he said to Alī ibn Yaqṭīn, "Is this the decree of the Hashemī?" Ibn Yaqteen immediately replied, "Praise be to Allah Who has granted this wisdom to the Household of the holy Prophet."

Mahdī replied, "You are right, O Rāfiḍī."[3]

Mahdī was very fond of drinking wine.

There are numerous Narrations that have prohibited and expounded the punishments for its sellers and consumers.

The Great Harm of Wine

1– *Surah A'rāf* 7:33.
2– *Surah Baqarah* 2:219.
3– *Wasā'il ash-Shī'ah*, vol 17, pp. 140141.

To be addicted with wine brings about great evils. Modern medical text books are full of examples regarding its harmfulness, among them are:

1. Its Harmfulness for Future Generations

Medical research has proven that the effects of alcohol are genetically transferred to future generations. Those whose parents are alcoholic show many symptoms of physical weakness, and may be afflicted with dangerous convulsions that eventually lead to mental retardation or even total paralysis, and infertility. Sometimes it may result in the death of an infant after delivery. In addition, future generations of wine drinkers may be afflicted with agonizing and painful deformations such as asymmetric skulls, dwarfism, belated growth of mental abilities, weakness of the memory, mental incapacitation, and so on. In fact Dr. Berjonous, Dr. Schawan, and Dr. Stocker have all established this fact.[1]

2. The Harm of Wine to the Heart and Blood

Researchers who have worked on wine have reached the conclusion that alcohol is the active agent in wine and can easily enter the blood circulation. The wine that enters the stomach is dispersed and spread over the body tissues and organs.

As for its effects on the heart, it has been proven that it increases the heart rate and when the rate reduces the heart loses vitality and the blood pressure increases inside the blood vessels which leads to perspiration.

Some physicians believe that alcoholism is one of the three factors that lead to arteriosclerosis, a dangerous illness that ruins the heart and ruptures the blood vessels inside the brain leading to paralysis or incurable disabilities.

3. The Danger of Wine to the Liver and the Kidney

After alcohol has been absorbed into the body, it reaches the

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1– *Usas aÒ-Ñiḥat wa al-Íayāt*, p. 287.

liver via the blood stream. Alcohol is among the things that inflame and destroy liver cells. If a person is an alcoholic, this inflammation leads to distension and fibrosis of the liver. Dr. Hil Huwat and Dr. Doth Huwat have both referred to this effect. On the other hand, alcohol affects the kidneys by decreasing urine because it stretches the blood vessels within the kidneys. Excessive alcohol accumulates in the kidneys and results in dangerous kidney inflammation.

4. Its Effects on the Stomach

It has been mentioned by physicians that after wine is mixed with the contents of the stomach, it will change into acidic matter that decomposes pepsin, which is an important element in digestion. Alcohol also inflames the mucous membranes of the stomach and stretches its blood vessels. It also deforms the stomach glands. Therefore, alcohol addiction affects stomach enzymes and leads to indigestion. That is why alcoholics complain of stomach pains.[1]

Some doctors believe that alcoholism leads to the following diseases:

1. Liver inflammation resulting in chronic thirst.

2. Nephritis (Kidney inflammation).

3. Paralysis.

4. Hysteria (madness).

5. General anxiety.

6. Lung disease

7. Lower resistance to deadly diseases like typhoid, that eventually lead to death, that have no cure.

These are some of the health hazards related to alcoholism. Economic damages must be added to all these losses as well

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1– *Al-Amal wa Íuqūq al-Amal fi al-Islām*, pp. 19-21.

since no matter how tight-handed a drunkard is, such a person inevitably tends toward extravagancy and are also likely to be a victim of many vices and evil deeds such as gambling and prostitution. Such persons are not ashamed of being notorious.

Means of Fighting against It

The following are some measures to fight this internecine addiction which is one of the most destructive things for human life and health:

1. Strong boycott of alcohol, elimination of methods to buy and sell it, destroying distillation instruments, and vigorous punishment of those who trade in it;

2. utilizing mass media to inform the public of its serious harms;

3. informing the citizens of its danger by clergymen and health organizations;

4. opening gyms to attract youths to different types of sports and useful entertainment;

5. banning any kind of advertisement that invites people to its consumption.

These were some of the ways to combat this destructive blight that ruins both common sense and moral virtues.

MATRIMONIAL LIFE

Islam deeply takes matrimonial life into consideration and has also set great importance by it because it is the first organization in building the Islamic society. Islam has defined some laws regarding this issue that makes it solid, consistent, and immune from sexual deviation –an illness that fills up hospitals and medical centers with millions of victims every year.

In this respect, the following are some Islamic laws that were formulated to protect human beings against deviation and crimes that may lead to ruination of matrimonial life.

Encouraging Marriage

Islam strongly encourages marriage and states that marriage is one of the most important factors in life. There are unanimous Narrations in this respect, some of which are as follows:

1. Marriage is an Islamic Tradition

Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) has encouraged marriage and has considered it as one of the traditions of the holy Prophet (ṣ). He has said: "Marry, because marriage is a tradition of the Messenger of God (ṣ) as he would say: Whoever wants to follow my tradition should get married because marriage is one of my traditions. You should also seek to have children because with that my followers will become more numerous than other nations."[1]

Indeed marriage is one of the traditions of the Messenger of God (ṣ) so those who do not marry are not following his

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1– *Wasā'il ash-Shī'ah*, chap. Marriage, vol. 20, p. 16.

traditions and have deviated from his laws.

2. Marriage is a Shield for Religion

What is obvious is that marriage protects humans from evil deeds that keep them away from correct religion.

Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) was quoted, reporting from his ancestor, the Messenger of God (ṣ), that: "Whoever gets married has made safe half of his or her faith."[1]

Marriage is a way not only to protect religion but also to protect human dignity and values and immunizes people from evil deeds.

3. The Act of Worship of a Married Person

Islam has considered the act of worship of married persons to be superior to unmarried ones.

Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) has quoted his father, Imam Muḥammad Bāqir (ʿa), as asking a man who came to him:

"Are you married?"

"No."

"I would not like to have the world and everything in it if I should spend a night without a wife." The Imam added saying: "A two-unit (*rak'at*) prayer of a married person is better than an unmarried person spending a whole night to pray and goes fasting the whole day." The Imam then gave the man an amount of money in order to get married.[2]

The Imam (ʿa) has also said: "A two-unit (*rak'at*) prayer of a married person is better than seventy units (*rak'at*) of prayer of an unmarried person."[3]

4. A Disgraceful Death is that of an Unmarried Person

Islam has called for marriage and it has also called Muslims to

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1– *Ibid*, p. 16.
2– *Ibid*, p. 18.
3– *Ibid*, p. 20.

marry sooner rather than later. That is why it considers the most disgraceful death to be that of unmarried persons because some of them think of nothing except sexual affairs and engaging in what Almighty Allah has prohibited (*ḥarām*).

Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) quoted from his ancestor, the Messenger of God (ṣ), that: "The most disgraceful of deaths among you are those of unmarried ones."[1]

5. Having a Pious Wife is to One's Best Advantage

Islam considers marriage to a pious woman as one of the successes of a Muslim's life.

It is reported in a narration that: "A servant of God cannot be bestowed with a blessing better than a pious wife. One who makes him happy when he looks at her and takes good care of her husband's property and soul in his absence."[2]

6. Early Marriage

Islam has recommended early marriage for protection against sexual deviation. Indeed Islam has stressed the need for the girls to get married at the beginning of puberty.

The holy Prophet (ṣ) said: "It is felicity for a man if his daughter does not menstruate in his house."[3]

After praising Almighty God in a sermon the holy Prophet (ṣ) said:

"O people! Gabriel has mentioned a subtle point to me: Virgin girls are like fruits on a tree; if fruit are not picked when they become ripe, they will be spoiled by sunlight and taken away by the winds. The same thing applies to virgin girls when they become mature, no one can solve their problem except a husband. If they do not marry, they are not protected against deviation and corruption because they are human beings."

1– *Ibid*, p. 19.
2– *Ibid*, p. 20.
3– *Ibid*, p. 64.

A man stood up and said to him:

"O Messenger of God, whom should I marry?"

"With a sufficing woman," he answered.

"Who is a sufficing woman?" the man asked.

The Prophet (ṣ) answered, "Believers are sufficient unto each other."[1]

There are other collections of Narrations that encourage young boys and girls to marry at the early stage of maturity so that they will be protected from evil deeds.

7. Reducing the Marriage Portion (mahr)

One of the rights of a wife upon her husband is marriage portion *(mahr)* which is regarded as assistance to the wife in her matrimonial life. Marriage portion *(mahr)* is not one of the cornerstones in a marriage contract. However if a marriage portion is not designated in the contract, it automatically changes to a portion befitting her station and it can be specified in the contract as either cash or any other type of benefit. Moreover, there is no limit for the amount of marriage portion *(mahr)* but some Islamic sects believe the marriage portion should not be less than the equivalent of ten dirhams.

Islam encourages smaller marriage portions. It is reported in a Prophetic narration that: "The best women of my nation are those whose marriage portion is little."[2]

The holy Prophet (ṣ) married his beloved Fatima, the leader of the women of the two worlds (ʿa), to her cousin, the Commander of the Faithful (ʿa) and the Portal to the Prophet's (ṣ) City of Knowledge, with a marriage portion of thirty dirhams. Their housing furniture consisted of some earthenware, a bed made of date skin, a leather water-skin and a

1– *Ibid*, pp. 61-62.
2– *Mustadrak al-Wasā'il*, vol. 14, p. 160.

blanket of sheep wool.[1]

The holy Prophet (ṣ) established the marriage between his dearest and his cousin in such simplicity while they were both also among the dearest ones to Almighty God. This is a lesson to his nation in marriage so that the young men and women do not deviate from the correct path through evil deeds.

Today's High Amounts of Marriage Portion (mahr)

It is very unfortunate that nowadays the marriage portion *(mahr)* is so high and some people are proud of daughters who specify high amounts of marriage portions *(Mahr)* as if the marriage portion is the selling price of their daughter and the more they increase the marriage portion the more they take pride. Some rich families are proud of the expensive furnishings and household appliances they purchase for their daughters. This has gone so far as to halt the marriage processes due to the inability of young men to afford such high expenses.

Young women cannot marry due to the high amounts of marriage portion *(mahr)* that are set. Thus, in many families there are single women and men who have advanced in age without getting married.

Girls have been turned into commodities lacking the good morals and virtues that are expected of them and their families seek out for their daughters young men with good standing.

They ask the following questions from the young boys:

What is your college degree? How much do you have in your bank account? What type of car do you have? How large is your mansion?

The most important thing for them is that the suitor be rich and have a college degree but they have no problem if he is immoral or is like an animal that seeks his wicked wishes through marriage and leaves his wife in a poor and miserable condition.

1– *Íayāt Sayyidat FāÔimah al-Zahrā* (ʿa), p. 134.

In the past good people who were among the best Muslims would ask about the virtue and religion of the man who intended marrying their daughters and would prefer the poor. Historians report that Yazīd ibn Muʿāwiyah wanted to marry Darda'i but her father didn't accept his request. He said: "I am afraid of the time when the castles of Yazīd would cause my daughter to forget the remembrance of Almighty God." Afterwards, he married her to a poor man. It is also worthy of note that Muʿāwiyah desired to marry a Muslim woman who sought the consent of the holy Prophet (ṣ). The Prophet said to her: "Do not marry him because he is a pauper."

The Rights of a Husband

1. Obedience

A husband has some rights regarding his wife. Among the important rights of a husband are to be obeyed by his wife who must carry out all his orders and abstain from whatever he has restricted her from. If the wife refuses, she is guilty and regarded as disobedient to the husband and she is not entitled to financial support.

The husband is the head of the family but divine wisdom has made women capable of pregnancy, delivering children, and training them which are indeed difficult assignments. A husband undertakes the management of financial matters and accordingly is the leader of the household. Therefore a wife must obey her husband except in cases that are prohibited by Islamic laws (*ḥarām*). A human being cannot be obeyed if it will amount to disobedience of the Creator.

A woman came to the holy Prophet (ṣ) and said: "O holy Prophet! I have come to you on behalf of all women. The Jihād you have talked about, what a huge reward the men have! Is there such reward for us too?"

The holy Prophet (ṣ) replied: "Obedience to your husband and recognition of his rights is equivalent to Jihād but few of you

implement this."[1]

There are many Narrations of this type obligating woman to be obedient to their husbands and to comply with their wishes.

2. Staying at Home

Another right of a husband upon his wife is for her to stay at home and not leave except with the husband's permission, so that she may train the children and nourish them with noble behaviors and good attributes. Leaving the house without the husband's consent often leads to disorder in the family system and negligence in the training of children.

Indeed! Leaving the house without the husband's permission is allowed only for her obligatory pilgrimage *(ḥajj wājib)* even if her husband refuses her permission because there is no such thing as obedience that amounts to disobedience of the Creator. A wife leaving the house with her husband's permission shouldn't wear makeup and leave her body uncovered in such way that will attract the attentions of others because this will lead to deviation and ruin the souls of youths and others as well. Indeed, in this respect she is responsible before Almighty God. I definitely believe that many sexual and moral deviations of youths are due to the dissoluteness of women and their lack of moral purity.

In a nutshell, by making it obligatory for women to stay at home Islam does not mean to be harsh to them or to take away their freedom but to obligate them to train their children and to protect their honor and values against evils. If the intellectuals of the nation took this into consideration, they would put an end to this situation and thus protect people from all sorts of corruption.

3. Politeness

Another right of a husband over his wife is that she should be polite towards him, should not make disputes, and should not

1– *Niẓām al-Usrah fi al-Islām*, p. 70.

do anything against his wishes because by so doing she is putting her matrimonial life at risk and thus destroying the life of her children.

The Rights of a Wife

Islam has defined the most splendid rights for women which guarantee her felicity, peace, and a stable life. Some of these rights are as follows:

1. Expenditure

Islam has made husbands responsible for the expenses of their wives. If a husband denies this right she may refer her case to a legal judge so that the judge forces him to pay. If he continues to deny this important right, his property will be confiscated and the equivalent amount of her expenses shall be paid to her out of her husband's property. In case the wife does not make recourse to the law, her expenses are regarded as a debt like any other and the husband is liable for such debts. Jurisprudent experts hold that if he is able to perform pilgrimage *(ḥajj)* but the wife's expenses is equivalent to that the money necessary for *ḥajj* he is regarded as incapable of performing pilgrimage *(ḥajj)* and must pay the expenses of his wife instead.

Types of Expenses of a Wife

A husband is obliged to pay his wife for the following expenses:

A. Housing

Having a home is one of the preliminary rights of the wife upon her husband. She can demand separate accommodations far from the husband's family in order to guarantee her freedom and wishes.

B. Food

This includes all required foods such as meat, bread, fruit, and so on.

C. Clothes

The clothes needed by the wife should include winter and summer clothes.

D. Furniture

The furniture includes suitable articles and facilities for the living room and the woman's bedroom.

E. Ornaments

Ornaments consist of the many types of things a woman uses to beautify herself.

Shīʿah jurists believe that all these expenses should be according to the woman's status and situation. They also believe that the expenses of a woman have priority over the expenses of close relatives. They have defined two conditions for the necessity for paying the expenses of a wife.

First: The marriage contract should be permanent. Therefore the expenses of a temporary wife are not incumbent upon the husband. Temporary marriage contracts are also called *mutʿah*.

Second: The woman should be obedient and comply with her husband especially in sexual relations.

2. Being Fair and Kind:

Another right of a woman upon her husband is for him to be kind and fair to her. God has declared in the Qur'ān:

وَعَاشِرُوهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ

Consort with them in an honorable manner.[1]

The holy Prophet (ṣ) has also encouraged men to be kind to their wives and to live in harmony with them. He (ṣ) has said: "The best of you is the one who acts the best with his family and I am better than you in goodness to my family."[2] The most obvious thing is that the husband should not hurt his wife's feelings and he should not behave badly towards her or her family in word or deed.

3. Sleeping Together

1– *Surah Nisāʾ* 4:19.
2– *Wasāʾil ash-Shīʿah*, vol. 20, p. 171.

One of the rights of wife upon her husband is for him to sleep with her in the same bed. It is emphasized that this physical closeness is one of the factors that create and spread love and affection between them. The right of sleeping together, according to jurists, must be exercised at least one night in every four nights.[1]

4. Sexual Relations

One of the rights of a wife upon her husband is sexual intercourse. Jurisprudents have defined the minimum limit to be once every four months. If the husband refuses to do so he is guilty and she may refer her case to a legal judge.[2]

Enjoyment

Islam also advises on sexual pleasure. Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) has quoted from his ancestor, the Messenger of God (ṣ), that: "When one of you wants to have sexual relations with his wife he should not behave like a bird; rather, he should take long without pauses in between."[3]

Again, citing the holy Prophet (ṣ) he said: "When one of you wants to have sexual relations with his wife, he should not rush her."[4]

The Commander of the Faithful, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa) has said: "When one of you wants to have sexual relation with his wife, he should not hasten his wife because women also have needs."[5]

Islam has solved all the issues concerning human beings and it has not leave any issue untouched. It has defined a luminous way for the felicity of human life.

1– *Niẓām al-Usrah fī al-Islām*, p. 69.
2– *Al-Lumʿah ad-Damashqiyah*, chap. Marriage, vol. 5, p. 104.
3– *Wasāʾil ash-Shīʿah* vol. 20 p. 117.
4– *Ibid*, p. 118.
5– *Ibid*.

Sexual Deviation

Sexual deviation is among the worst prohibitions *(ḥarām)* and the biggest calamities that not only destroys family life and human dignity but also is a danger to health. Therefore Islam has prohibited all types of sexual deviation. Some of these are as follows:

Fornication

Islam has definitively prohibited fornication due to the considerable problems it causes. These problems are as follows:

1. Betrayal of the family and dissolution of love between husband and wife.
2. Loss of the father's love for his children if he accuses his wife of betrayal.
3. It creates hatred between husband and wife.
4. Youth will refrain from getting married as they are satisfied through fornication.

Verily, fornication is an animalistic behavior that destroys the whole meaning of being human and significantly distances people from humanity. Indeed God considers fornication to be as grievous a sin as polytheism and taking lives that God has considered sacrosanct. The Most High has said:

وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَدْعُونَ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ وَلَا يَقْتُلُونَ النَّفْسَ الَّتِي حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ وَلَا يَزْنُونَ وَمَن يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ يَلْقَ أَثَامًا يُضَاعَفْ لَهُ الْعَذَابُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَيَخْلُدْ فِيهِ مُهَانًا

Those who do not invoke another god besides Allah, and do not kill a soul [whose life] Allah has made inviolable, except with due cause, and do not commit fornication. Whoever does that shall encounter its retribution, the punishment being doubled for them on the Day of Resurrection. In it they will abide in

humiliation forever.[1]

God has also said:

وَلاَ تَقْرَبُواْ الزِّنَى إِنَّهُ كَانَ فَاحِشَةً وَسَاء سَبِيلًا

Do not approach fornication. It is indeed an indecency and an evil way.[2]

Fornication is one of the calamities that destroy family life and the worst of prohibitions (*ḥarām)* that destroy human life.

Terrible Harms Caused by Fornication:

One of the most horrible harms of fornication to human beings concerns health. The following is a list of some of the most horrible sexual diseases:

1. Venereal Diseases

One of the consequences of fornication is venereal disease, which severely affects all organs and systems of the body including the nervous, respiratory, lymphatic, digestive, and genital systems as well as the bones, joints, glands, skin, eyes, and ears. One who has contracted one of these diseases cannot be cured except in death. Medical books have described the dangers of these diseases in detail.[3]

2. Gonorrhea

Gonorrhea is a disease in urethra that may lead to blindness. Modern medical books have described many horrible consequences of this disease.

3. Syphilis

Syphilis is one of the worst diseases. It is also called the leech of diseases. It affects different parts and tissues of the body in various stages. In the first stage an ulcer is formed on the body. In the second stage, rashes can be seen on the body, and in third

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1– *Surah Furqān* 25:68-69.
2– *Surah Isra'* 17:32.
3– *Ruhu ad-dīn al-Islamī*, p. 445.

stage any part of the body may be attacked including the brain which could lead to insanity. Sometimes the spinal cord is attacked by this disease and the patient is paralyzed and sometimes heart and vessels are affected.

Another effect of this disease is that if a pregnant woman contracts this disease, her baby may be born congenitally defected or even die in the womb.[1]

4. Soft Wound

Soft wound is a red incurable wound which has bad effect on the body. Modern medical books have described it in details.

These are some diseases that affect fornicators. In addition, fornication destroys generation, dignity, grace, and family life.[2]

The Severe Punishment of Fornication

Islam has defined the harshest of punishments for fornication. In case of adultery, he or she is to be stoned to death. Some jurisprudent experts consider combining lashing and stoning for the case of adultery. This verdict is enforced for both Muslims and unbelievers whether man or woman.

But if the fornicator is unmarried the punishment is one hundred lashes according to God the Most High:

الزَّانِيَةُ وَالزَّانِي فَاجْلِدُوا كُلَّ وَاحِدٍ مِّنْهُمَا مِئَةَ جَلْدَةٍ وَلَا تَأْخُذْكُم بِهِمَا رَأْفَةٌ فِي دِينِ اللَّهِ إِن كُنتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَلْيَشْهَدْ عَذَابَهُمَا طَائِفَةٌ مِّنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

As for the fornicatress and the fornicator, strike each of them a hundred lashes, and let not pity for them overcome you in Allah's law, if you believe in Allah and the Last Day, and let

1– *Usus aÒ-Ñiḥat wa al-Íayāt*, pp. 218-220.
2– *An-Niẓām at-Tarbawī fī al-Islām*, p. 326.

their punishment be witnessed by a group of the faithful.[1]

This severe punishment will put an end to corruption and serve as an obstacle for those who intend to commit such acts.

According to French law, adultery is considered to be an offence. However, the punishment is not the same for both couples. If a man commits adultery in the house of his wife, he will be punished with payment of a fine. On the other hand, a wife is imprisoned if she commits adultery.[2]

Obviously this mild penalty will not eradicate adultery which destroys the soul of millions of people.

Homosexuality

Homosexual relations consist one of the evilest deeds prohibited by Islamic law because such relations undermine the family system and spread deviation and mischief on earth. Anyone who commits this sin may be affected by venereal diseases endangering their health and life. In addition, it leads to sexual incapacity with women and causes youths to refrain from marriage.

The Punishment for Homosexuality

The punishment for homosexuality is the harshest one. It includes:

1. Killing by the sword;

2. burning with fire;

3. felling a wall over the person; and

4. throwing from a high place.

If the person on whom the act of pederasty has been committed is mature, of sound mind, and has committed this sin by his own will, then he must be executed. However, immature

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1– *Surah Nur* 24:2.
2– *Al-Qānūn al-Jina'i al-Farānsī*, pp. 337-339.

persons who commit homosexual acts should be warned with a lesser punishment decided by the judge.[1]

This severe punishment will uproot this sin and prevent people from committing it.

Its Permissibility in England

Once homosexuality was forbidden in England and there was a punishment for it. However the king of England persistently obtained the approval of the parliament to make it legal. In this way, the British government cast its people into great misfortune and opened the doors of deviation. This crime leads to destruction of family because men stay away from women and look for young men to marry. British newspapers publish notices for these types of marriages.

Self-gratification

This is also known as masturbation and the purpose of it is to satisfy the sexual instinct and ejaculate semen. Islam has prohibited it because it is unhealthy and harmful to the body.

Self-gratification leads to depression and physical weakness. I have presented some preventive measures for this in my book "*Nizām al-Usra Fī al-Islām*" (*The Family System in Islam*).

Prohibition of Sexual Intercourse with a Menstruating Woman

Islam has prohibited sexual intercourse with menstruating women. This prohibition is mentioned in the Book of God. The Most High has said:

وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْمَحِيضِ قُلْ هُوَ أَذًى فَاعْتَزِلُواْ النِّسَاء فِي الْمَحِيضِ وَلاَ تَقْرَبُوهُنَّ حَتَّىَ يَطْهُرْنَ فَإِذَا تَطَهَّرْنَ فَأْتُوهُنَّ مِنْ حَيْثُ أَمَرَكُمُ اللّهُ إِنَّ اللّهَ يُحِبُّ التَّوَّابِينَ وَيُحِبُّ الْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ

1– *Ar-RauÃah, Kitāb al-Íudūd*, vol. 10, p. 144.

They ask you concerning [intercourse during] menses. Say, 'It is hurtful.' So keep away from wives during the menses, and do not approach them till they are clean. And when they become clean, go to them as Allah has commanded you. Indeed Allah loves the penitent and He loves those who keep clean.[1]

Modern medical studies have established that having sex with a menstruating woman is harmful to both husband and wife since the blood coming as a result of menstruation contains various types of germs that are immediately transferred to the man and causes harmful inflammations in his body. Also during the menstrual period internal layers of the woman are closed and they may be damaged through sexual intercourse. It may transfer germs from the womb to other parts of the body, which may harm the woman's health. Besides that, sexual intercourse may also cause nervous tensions in such periods.[2]

Islam's prohibition of sexual intercourse with menstruating women has some important benefits for both men and women and keeps them from developing some diseases.

1– *Surah Baqarah* 2:222.
2– *Rūḥ ad-Dīn al-Islāmī*, p. 412.

SPEAKING AND WALKING

Islam has cast light into every aspect of human life including motivations, wishes, and tendencies and it has offered some ways whereby human beings can become happy and successful thus blessing the society. Following these ways can assist human beings in avoiding all evil tendencies and misbehavior that make them miserable and may lower their status.

Indeed, Islam is a gift from God unto His servants and His blessing upon them. Islamic law has defined some rules that exalt human beings to the highest degrees of perfection so that they can become the true representatives of God and superior to all creatures on earth. Among the actions that Islam has set rules for is speaking and walking. Here are some Islamic rules for these two actions.

Speaking

Speaking is an innate disposition of humans and a part of their primeval nature.[1] God has coupled it with other blessings of creation for human beings.

1– Logicians define human beings as talking animals. They believe that speaking is a distinguishing feature between humans and other animals. However there are some logicians who maintain that the definition of speech is perception. However, I do not believe this interpretation to be true since all animals have the power of perception to some extent, all of them perceive danger and avoid or flee dangerous situations, and they try to withstand dangerous circumstances in order for their progeny to survive.

God the Most High has declared:

الرَّحْمَنُ عَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ خَلَقَ الْإِنسَانَ عَلَّمَهُ الْبَيَانَ

The All-beneficent has taught the Qur'an. He created man, [and] taught him articulate speech.[1]

Nature of Speech

Speaking consists of thoughts and ideas deriving from the soul and articulated by the tongue. Speech derives from the mind and the tongue represents the mind.

God Almighty has made speech a way of mutual understanding between humans. Furthermore, it is a means through which people express their needs. With it God has distinguished human being from other animals. By means of speech new scientific discoveries are made and various languages are formed in the world. If there was no speech, civilization would not have come into existence on the earth.

Through speech humans carry out crimes and murders, and when they confess their crimes, debts and other things, they are obliged to them. It is said that the confession of a sound person against himself is bound on him and is permissible. The following are some rules and manners which Islam has defined for speech.

1. Good Words

One of the subject matter of Islamic trainings is fine speech of Muslims with their family, relatives, neighbors, and other people. God the Most High has said:

إِلَيْهِ يَصْعَدُ الْكَلِمُ الطَّيِّبُ وَالْعَمَلُ الصَّالِحُ يَرْفَعُهُ

...To Him ascends the good word, and He elevates righteous

1– *Surah Raḥmān* 55:14

conduct…[1]

Good words will ascend to Almighty God and it should be one of the Islamic training procedures for purification of the soul and manner. It is obligatory for all Muslims to avoid bad words and to talk with people using polite and nice words that will make them appreciated and loved by all people.

2. Nice Speech

God has ordered His great Prophet (ṣ) to train Muslims in the way of nice speech. God the Most High has said:

وَقُل لِّعِبَادِي يَقُولُواْ الَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ يَنزَغُ بَيْنَهُمْ إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ كَانَ لِلإِنْسَانِ عَدُوًّا مُّبِينًا

Tell My servants to speak in a manner which is the best. Indeed Satan incites ill feeling between them, and Satan is indeed man's manifest enemy.[2]

He also said:

وَقُولُواْ لِلنَّاسِ حُسْنًا

…and speak kindly to people…[3]

Speaking nicely includes talking with family members, neighbors, and members of the society. It is also one of the factors that cause mutual affection, virtue, and courtesy.

3. How Should One Speak?

Islam has defined the manner of talking with others thus: we should keep our voice low and not talk loudly. God the Most High has said:

وَاغْضُضْ مِن صَوْتِكَ إِنَّ أَنكَرَ الْأَصْوَاتِ لَصَوْتُ الْحَمِيرِ

1– *Surah Fatir* 35:10.
2– *Surah Isrā'* 17:53.
3– *Surah Baqarah* 2:83.

...and lower your voice. Indeed the ungainliest of voices is the donkey's voice.[1]

Imam Musa ibn Jaʿfar (ʿa) has quoted from the holy Prophet (ṣ) that he liked the voice of men to be low and hated loud voices.[2]

Some Arabs would stand in front of the house of the holy Prophet (ṣ) and loudly call "O Muḥammad!" so the following verse was descended:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُنَادُونَكَ مِن وَرَاء الْحُجُرَاتِ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ

Indeed those who call you from behind the apartments, most of them do not apply reason.[3]

One of the Islamic manners by which humans can reach the highest of ranks is to avoid talking too loudly or too quietly. This is one of the Islamic teachings that brings about exalted morals and politeness.

A. How Must We Speak with Parents?

Islam has remarkably emphasized the importance of respectful attitudes and honor towards parents. In this respect Islam has coupled the obedience of parents with that of God the Most High. Allah the Most High has said:

وَقَضَى رَبُّكَ أَلاَّ تَعْبُدُواْ إِلاَّ إِيَّاهُ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا إِمَّا يَبْلُغَنَّ عِندَكَ الْكِبَرَ أَحَدُهُمَا أَوْ كِلاَهُمَا فَلاَ تَقُل لَّهُمَآ أُفٍّ

Your Lord has decreed that you shall not worship anyone except Him, and [He has enjoined] kindness to parents. Should they reach old age at your side –one of them or both– do not say to them, 'Fie!'[4]

1– *Surah Luqman* 31:19.
2– *Íayāt Imām Mūsā ibn Ja'far*, vol. 2, p. 331.
3– *Surah Íujurāt* 49:4.
4– *Surah Isrā' 17:* 23.

Respecting and doing good to parents is an obligatory task from God upon His servants and everyone will be questioned about it on the Day of Resurrection.

Talking to parents must be in a completely polite and humble manner. The child has no right to talk aggressively to them in such a way that would hurt their feelings. Almighty God has said:

وَلاَ تَنْهَرْهُمَا وَقُل لَّهُمَا قَوْلًا كَرِيمًا وَاخْفِضْ لَهُمَا جَنَاحَ الذُّلِّ مِنَ الرَّحْمَةِ وَقُل رَّبِّ ارْحَمْهُمَا كَمَا رَبَّيَانِي صَغِيرًا

And do not chide them, but speak to them noble words. Lower the wing of humility to them, out of mercy, and say, 'My Lord! Have mercy on them, just as they reared me when I was [a] small [child]!'[1]

Based on this method defined by Almighty God in His holy Book, it is obligatory for a Muslim to try his best with all the power he has obtained to do well in respecting his or her parents in a satisfactory manner for them. A son or daughter has no right to even utter a word that would make them sad even if it is just "phew!"

Like kindness, it has also been greatly emphasized that one must take good care of one's parents in their old age. One should pray in their favor for God's mercy and forgiveness.

There are numerous Narrations from the holy Prophet (ṣ) and the Infallible Imams (ʿa) that stress the necessity of rendering service to parents. Some of these are as follows:

1. Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) reported the following Narration from the holy Prophet (ṣ).

A man came to the Prophet and said: "O holy Prophet! I am interested in jihād (holy war) because I am energetic…"

1– *Surah Isrā'* 17:23-24.

The holy Prophet (ṣ) thanked him and said:

> "Undertake jihad for God's sake because in this case if you are martyred you will live on receiving your livelihood from Allah. If you are martyred your reward is upon God and if you return alive you will be innocent and sinless as the first day you were born."

The man replied: "O Messenger of God! I have an old father and mother who love me and do not want me to go."

The holy Prophet (ṣ) ordered him not to go to jihād and to stay beside his parents saying: "Stay with your parents. I swear to the One who has control over my soul that staying with one's parents for one day and one night is better than one year of jihād (i.e. fighting in the cause of God)."[1]

The reward for treating one's parents with respect is greater than fighting in the way of God, which is one of the doors to the Paradise. According to Imam ali's (ʿa) interpretation, jihad is a way God opens for his special saints.

2- After converting from Christianity to Islam Zakariyā ibn Ibrāhīm went to see Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa).

Zakariyā said to him: "I was Christian and now I am Muslim."

"What have you seen in Islam?"

"I have seen God's saying that:

مَا كُنتَ تَدْرِي مَا الْكِتَابُ وَلَا الْإِيمَانُ وَلَكِن جَعَلْنَاهُ نُورًا نَّهْدِي بِهِ مَنْ نَّشَاء مِنْ عِبَادِنَا وَإِنَّكَ لَتَهْدِي إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ

...You did not know what the Book is, nor what is faith; but We made it a light that We may guide by its means whomever We wish of Our servants..."[2]

1– *An-Niẓām at-Tarbawī fī al-Islām*, p. 84.
2– *Surah Shura* 42:52.

The Imam raised his hands in prayer asking that God grant him success and guidance. Zakariyā said to the Imam: "My parents are Christian and my mother is blind. Should I stay with them and eat with them from the same plate?"

Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) said: "Do they eat pork?"

"No, they do not even touch it."

Imam replied: "It is not a problem. Take care of your mother and accord her respect. When she dies, do not leave her funeral affairs to others and carry out the responsibility yourself."

Having returned to his city, Zakariyā began displaying exemplary behavior toward his mother to the extent that his mother was astonished and said to him: "My son! When we believed in the same religion you did not behave like this to me. Now that you believe in *Hanīf* (i.e. Islam) what has made you be so kind to me?"

He replied: "Someone from our Prophet's descendents has ordered me to act this way."

The mother said: "Is he a Prophet?"

"No, he is a descendent of the holy Prophet."

"My son, this is a bequest from a holy Prophet and your religion is the best of religions."

She then asked her son to introduce Islam to her and consequently converted to Islam.[1]

Islam has been established on the basis of virtue and perfection and all types of respect and kindness to parents have been defined in Islam.

3. Islam has emphasized serving one's parents especially the mother and doing well by her more than the father. Indeed it was reported from Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) that a man came to the holy

1– *An-Niẓām at-Tarbawī fī al-Islām*, pp. 84-85.

Prophet (ṣ) and said to him: "O Messenger of God! With whom should I act well?"

"Your mother."

"Then to whom?"

"Your mother."

"Then to whom?"

"Your mother."

"Then to whom?"

"Your father."[1]

A person will be questioned by God especially regarding how she or he has shown respect to and taken care of his or her mother because mothers have the greatest rights upon their children.

Human beings are so weak in meeting the rights truly deserved by their mothers regardless of the services rendered to them. It has been reported in a Narration that a man was carrying his mother on his shoulders, circumambulating the house of God *(tawwāf)*. He then asked the holy Prophet (ṣ): "Have I satisfied her rights?" The holy Prophet (ṣ) replied: "No, this has not even satisfied the right of a moan among her moans."

Muḥammad bin Al-Walid al-Faqīh has described a parent's affections by the following beautiful lines of poetry:

> I wish a child were aware of the sorrow his parents were going through little by little at the time of separation. A distressed mother is restless for the love she has for her child. There is a tear in the corner of the father's eye, for being away from him; they drink the glass of sorrow sip by sip. They reveal their inner longings. The grief of a mother who is ill inwardly and the cry of an aged man

1– *Usūl al-Kāfī*, vol. 2, pp. 161-162.

who is old in his essence, the child should replace pride with kindness likewise he should reward them with his pleasant behavior.

B. How Must We Talk with Teachers and Masters?

A teacher or master deserves nice words from her or his students in all educational stages and levels. Students should respect and glorify their teachers, because teachers play an influential role in building and cultivating their personality. If not for their efforts you would not have acquired any knowledge. Their right is more than that of a father.

Shāfiʿī has said: "I was paging through a book quietly as that Mālik (my master) would not be disturbed." A person should not call teachers by their first name and should tolerate their mistakes.

Sufyan ibn Uyaynat was told: "A group of people will come to you from afar but you will treat them with anger and they shall probably leave you and go away." He replied: "If they abandon benefit just for my bad temper, they are stupid"[1]. Also among the manners students should observe before their teachers not to lean on a pillow in front of them and abstain from making fun of them or doing anything that degrades their status.

Types of Speech

Speech is of various and different types some of them are as follows:

1. Honesty

Honesty is among the most distinguished kinds of virtue and perfection. It serves as a song of progress and nobility of a nation and likewise serves as a matter of pride and glory for every individual. God Almighty has called upon His servants to adopt such morals. Allah the Most High has said:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُواْ اتَّقُواْ اللّهَ وَكُونُواْ مَعَ الصَّادِقِينَ

1– *An-Niẓām at-Tarbawī fī al-Islām*, p. 186.

O you who have faith! Be wary of Allah, and be with the Truthful.[1]

He has also said:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا

O you who have faith! Be wary of Allah, and speak upright words.[2]

Honesty is one of the necessities of life and through it rights are claimed and souls and properties are protected. It beautifies life and is superior to all spiritual excellences. Indeed the honorable Prophet (ṣ) and the infallible Imams (ʿa) have also regarded honesty to be very important. Here are a number of some Narrations in this respect:

1. The honorable Prophet (ṣ) has said:

   Honesty is what beautifies speech.[3]

2. The honorable Prophet (ṣ) has also said:

   It is obligatory for you to speak the truth because honesty leads to goodness and goodness leads to paradise, and a person will not continue speaking the truth but that her or his name is written among the most truthful ones before God.[4]

3. The Commander of the Faithful, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa), has said:

   Adhere to honesty because it is salvation.[5]

4. Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) has said:

   One who tells the truth purifies one's deeds.[1]

1– *Surah Tawbah* 9:119.
2– *Surah Aḥzāb* 33:70.
3– *Man lā Yahduruhu al-Faqīh*, vol. 4, p. 402.
4– *Nahj al-Fasāḥat*, vol. 2, p. 550.
5– *Al-Khisāl*, p. 614.

Honesty is one of the most important principles upon which Islamic life has been established. Taking transactions as an example, if there is no truth in them it will lead to lack of trust between people and eventually to economic depression. For example if a person sells a product and claims it to be sound and safe and it later becomes clear that his claim was false eventually this will ruin the communicative channels between people. In this respect, the law has defined the right of cancellation and return of the product to the owner in order to compensate for losses and damages.

In a nutshell, truthfulness is one of the necessities of social life in Islam.

Kinds of Truthfulness:

Truthfulness has various forms and kinds that are interconnected with the lives of people and their social reality. Some of them are as follows:

A. Truthfulness in Making Promises

To be honest in making promises is one of the most valuable characteristics of a human being. God has praised His prophet Ismāʿīl (ʿa) for having this characteristic saying:

وَاذْكُرْ فِي الْكِتَابِ إِسْمَاعِيلَ إِنَّهُ كَانَ صَادِقَ الْوَعْدِ وَكَانَ رَسُولًا نَّبِيًّا

And mention in the Book, Ismāʿīl. Indeed he was true to his promise, and an apostle and a prophet.[2]

B. Trustworthiness

Another type of truthfulness is to fulfill a trust. The holy Qur'ān considers this to be an exalted attribute of a believer. Almighty Allah has said:

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ... وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِأَمَانَاتِهِمْ وَعَهْدِهِمْ رَاعُونَ

1– *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 2, p. 104.
2– *Surah Maryam* 19:54.

Certainly, the faithful have attained salvation [they are…] and those who keep their trusts and covenants.[1]

C. Relationship in Social Affairs

Among the various kinds of truthfulness and the most important of them is honesty in social relationships since all acts of trade, purchase, sale, and other types of transactions depend on it.

It is very true that if truthfulness ceases to exist, all transactions will be affected.

2. Lying

A lie is an utterance that is contrary to reality. It is one of the most adamantly prohibited acts as well as being the source of all crimes and sins. Indeed, God has decreed lack of guidance for those that speak lies. The Most Gracious has said:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي مَنْ هُوَ مُسْرِفٌ كَذَّابٌ

...Indeed Allah does not guide someone who is a profligate, a liar.[2]

He has also said:

اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي مَنْ هُوَ كَاذِبٌ كَفَّارٌ

...Indeed Allah does not guide someone who is a liar and an ingrate.[3]

He shall also condemn liars to permanent suffering in the eternal life. God Almighty has also said:

وَلاَ تَقُولُواْ لِمَا تَصِفُ أَلْسِنَتُكُمُ الْكَذِبَ هَذَا حَلاَلٌ وَهَذَا حَرَامٌ لِّتَفْتَرُواْ عَلَى اللّهِ الْكَذِبَ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَفْتَرُونَ عَلَى اللّهِ الْكَذِبَ لاَ يُفْلِحُونَ مَتَاعٌ قَلِيلٌ وَلَهُمْ

1– *Surah Mu'minūn* 23:8.
2– *Surah Ghāfir* 40:28.
3– *Surah Zumar* 39:3.

عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ

Do not say, asserting falsely with your tongues, 'This is lawful, and this is unlawful,' to fabricate lies against Allah. Indeed those who fabricate lies against Allah will not be felicitous. A trifling enjoyment, and there will be a painful punishment for them.[1]

Lying is degeneracy and separation from sacred virtues. Almighty Allah warns us in His book about believing sinners and liars. Thus He, the Most High, has said:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِن جَاءكُمْ فَاسِقٌ بِنَبَإٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوا أَن تُصِيبُوا قَوْمًا بِجَهَالَةٍ فَتُصْبِحُوا عَلَى مَا فَعَلْتُمْ نَادِمِينَ

O you who have faith! If a profligate [person] should bring you some news, verify it, lest you should visit [harm] on some people out of ignorance, and then become regretful for what you have done.[2]

Our sacred Imams who are the light of Islam have also warned us against lying. Imam Muḥammad Bāqir (ʿa) has said:

> God has locked evil deeds, and drinking wine is a key to that lock but telling lies is worse than drinking wine.[3]

Imam Sajjād (ʿa) has advised his son:

> Beware of telling lies, whether great or small, in earnest or in jest. Indeed, persons will find the nerve to tell great lies when they become accustomed to small ones. Do you not know that the holy Prophet (ṣ) once said some people keep telling the truth until Almighty God writes their names among the most

1– *Surah Naḥl* 16:116-117.
2– *Surah Ĺujurāt* 49:6.
3– *UÒūl al-Kāfī,* vol. 2, p. 325-326.

> truthful and some keep telling lies until Almighty God writes their names among the untruthful?[1]

Imam Muḥammad Bāqir (ʿa) has said:

> Lies ruin faith.[2]

There are plenty of such Narrations, which warn liars of God's punishment on the Day of Resurrection.

Types of Lies

There are different types of lies some of which are as follows:

1. Counterfeiting Narrations

Forging Narrations of religious leaders is one of the worst types of lies that considerably harm Islam. Muʿāwiyah, the head of the Umayyad dynasty, established a number of committees to forge Narrations. The holy Prophet (ṣ) has prophesized the forging of two categories of Narrations:

One: Forging Narrations about the virtues of the Companions in that they were more virtuous than the Members of the Household of the holy Prophet (ʿa), persons who are the center of revelation and equals of the holy Qur'ān. They have forged Narrations about the virtues of all the Companions of the holy Prophet. For instance, that they are like guiding stars and Muslims are guided by following any of them. This type of Narration was forged in order to praise the Companions, among whom are hypocrites and apostates like Sumrat Ibn Jundab, Abu Sufyan and his son Muʿāwiyah, Marwān ibn Ḥakam, and others, who have no hope of veneration from Almighty Allah. They considered these people to be among the holy Prophet's (ṣ) close allies. The forgers of Narrations also endeavored to praise the Caliphs and to prove that they were the most pious and virtuous of Muslims. Some of these Narrations were presented to Imam Muḥammad Bāqir (ʿa) who rejected them

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1– *Ibid*, p. 325.
2– *Ibid*, p. 326.

and gave several reasons for their spuriousness.

Two: Forging Narrations in order to degrade the Members of the Household of the holy Prophet (ʿa) and to devalue their dignity. On this basis they have forged many Narrations in condemnation of the Commander of the Faithful, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa). They have also forged Narrations that reproach Abu Óālib, the supporter of Islam who raised the flag of monotheism. He was a believer among the Quraysh and the Sheikh of the desert. The forgers claimed that he died as an infidel, but in reality had it not been for his struggle and his defense of Islam, the religion of Islam could not have endured and the banner of Monotheism could have been erased from existence forever.

In a nutshell, hundreds of Narrations were forged on the virtues of all the companions as well as against the personage of the holy Prophet (ṣ). They sometimes prefer his Companions more than him. Regretfully, these counterfeit Narrations have been compiled in books "Siḥaḥ" and "Sunan" (i.e. the most authentic books in the Sunni world after the holy Qur'ān). There is no doubt that if the compilers of these two books were aware of their falsity and the repercussions thereof, they would not have compiled such books of Narrations.

The holy Prophet (ṣ) was aware of the lies that would be said about him so he said in his farewell pilgrimage *(ḥajjah al-wadāʿ)*:

> Many lies are going to be made about me. It will be so. The abode of whoever deliberately tells lies about me is in the hellfire.[1]

False Narrations have caused detriments to Islam, have distorted its luminous reality, and have led to disunity and discrepancies among the Muslims.

1– *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 62. There is consensus among the scholars regarding the verity of this narration.

2. Perjury

Another kind of lie is to give false testimony that may cause others to be deprived of their rights or even lose their lives. Perjury eventually leads to widespread corruption. Indeed, Almighty God has established it to be on the same level with polytheism, which is one of the worst sins. Allah the Most High has said:

فَاجْتَنِبُوا الرِّجْسَ مِنَ الْأَوْثَانِ وَاجْتَنِبُوا قَوْلَ الزُّورِ

...So avoid the abomination of idols, and avoid false speech.[1]

And He has described His closest servants thus:

وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَشْهَدُونَ الزُّورَ وَإِذَا مَرُّوا بِاللَّغْوِ مَرُّوا كِرَامًا

Those who do not give false testimony.[2]

Historians have referred to the first perjury in Islam as the perjury that was committed during the rule of the Commander of the Faithful, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa), the heir of the holy Prophet and the Portal to the City of the Prophet's Knowledge, when Ayishah prepared an army in Mecca to fight against Imam ʿAlī and conquer Basra. On their way to Basra Ayishah was barked at by dogs. She inquired about the name of the place and was told that it was '*Ḥaw'āb*'. She said, "Take me back because I once heard the holy Prophet (ṣ) tell his wives that, "Any of you who is barked at by the dogs of Ḥaw'āb is on a misguided path." When Ibn al-Zubayr heard what she said, he called upon forty witnesses to testify that the place was not Ḥaw'āb. Consequently, Ayishah submitted to their testimonies and led her army to fight against Imam ʿAlī (ʿa).

3. Calumny

Another type of lie that Islam has prohibited is calumny. This

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1– *Surah Ḥajj* 22:30.
2– *Surah Furqān* 25:72.

means to traduce another person for revenge and to discredit someone whom one cannot directly face. Its prohibition has been clearly expounded in the holy Qur'ān:

وَمَن يَكْسِبْ خَطِيئَةً أَوْ إِثْمًا ثُمَّ يَرْمِ بِهِ بَرِيئًا فَقَدِ احْتَمَلَ بُهْتَانًا وَإِثْمًا مُّبِينًا

But someone who commits a mistake or sin and then accuses an innocent person of it is indeed guilty of calumny and a flagrant sin.[1]

The holy Prophet of God (ṣ) has said:

> Whoever calumniates a faithful man or woman, and tells lies against him or her, God shall put them on a pile of burning fire until what they have said comes out of them.[2]

Islam has prohibited calumniation in order to safeguard social relations and to prevent hatred among Muslims.

4. Breach of Promise

Another type of lie is to break one's promise. This vicious habit is mainly seen among hypocrites. The holy Prophet (ṣ) once listed some signs of hypocrites and breach of promise was one of them. He (ṣ) has said, "Hypocrites have three signs: They lie when they talk, they break promises when they give their word, and they betray when they are given trust."[3]

Breaching of promises is a behavior that is rooted in souls that have no exalted principles or fundamentals.

What is worth mentioning here is the truce between Muʿāwiyah ibn Abū Sufyān and Imam Ḥasan Zakī (ʿa). Muʿāwiyah accepted several conditions that led to their truce. However, later in a speech he said, "I offered some conditions to Ḥasan

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1– *Surah Nisā'* 4:112.
2– *Wasā'il ash-Shī'ah*, vol. 12, p. 287.
3– *Mustadrak al-Wasā'il,* vol. 14, p. 13; *Sahih al-Bukhārī*, vol. 1, p. 14; *Sahih Muslim*, vol. 1 p. 56.

ibn ʿAlī. I now tread upon those conditions and will not fulfill any of them." This shows the ignorance in which Muʿāwiyah was brought up.

5. Talebearing

This is a type of lie that creates unrest among people and also promotes hatred, enmity, and hostility among them. Almighty God has ordered us to disregard what tattlers say. He has said:

وَلَا تُطِعْ كُلَّ حَلَّافٍ مَّهِينٍ هَمَّازٍ مَّشَّاءٍ بِنَمِيمٍ

And do not obey any vile swearer, scandal-monger, talebearer…[1]

A talebearer is a person who creates enmity and weakens kindness and love among the people. There are various Narrations on deprecation of this evil habit.

Indeed, the holy Prophet (ṣ) has told his followers, "Shall I inform you of the worst person among you?"

"Yes, O Messenger of Allah."

"Those of you who tattle; they separate friends and oppress the innocent."[2]

Imam Bāqir (ʿa) has said:

> It is forbidden for the censorious and talebearers to enter paradise.[3]

When some people dispraised Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) before Manṣūr, the infidel of the Abbasid dynasty, Imam told him, "Do not believe those relatives of yours who have been deprived of paradise by God. They have made the hellfire their last abode since a tattler is a perjurer who helps the devil in deceiving people. Indeed, God says regarding them:

1– *Surah Qalam* 68:10-11.
2– *Al-Wāfī*, vol. 2, p. 164; *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 2, p. 253.
3– *Al-Kafi*, vol. 2, p. 274.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِن جَاءكُمْ فَاسِقٌ بِنَبَإٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوا أَن تُصِيبُوا قَوْمًا بِجَهَالَةٍ فَتُصْبِحُوا عَلَى مَا فَعَلْتُمْ نَادِمِينَ

O you who have faith! If a profligate [person] should bring you some news, verify it, lest you should visit [harm] on some people out of ignorance, and then become regretful for what you have done."[1]

Tattling undermines the love among people and creates hatred and enmity. It also leads to the destruction of wealth, shedding of blood, and loss of dignity.

The infallible Imams (ʿa) have warned us of believing what tattlers say.

Muḥammad ibn Mufaḍḍal quoted an incident with Imam Mūsā Kāẓim (ʿa) thus:

I said to the Imam: May my soul be sacrificed for you! I was given unpleasant news about one of my friends, something that my friend denied when I inquired about it from him whereas the news was given to me by trustworthy people.

The Imam (ʿa) replied:

> O Muḥammad! Do not believe your own ears and your own eyes about your brother (in faith) even if fifty people bear sworn witness against him in any issue! Accept the word of your brother and disbelieve them and do not spread something that will destroy his good name and cause him shame lest you be among those about which Allah says the following:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُحِبُّونَ أَن تَشِيعَ الْفَاحِشَةُ فِي الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

Indeed those who want indecency to spread among the faithful

1– *Bihar al-Anwār*, vol. 47, p. 168; *Surah Ḥujurāt* 49:6.

there is a painful punishment for them in the world and the Hereafter, and Allah knows and you do not know."[1]

Indeed, Islam passionately tries to make love and affection govern Muslim communities so that rifts that may destroy their life do not grow between them.

With this we conclude the discussion on the types of lying, which is one of the most prohibited habits in Islam.

6. Backbiting

Backbiting is one of the types of utterance prohibited by Almighty God. Backbiting means saying something about another Muslim that they do not like. This can result in the belittlement of a Muslim's dignity and may ruin his or her social reputation. It should suffice as a censure that God has compared backbiting with eating the flesh of a dead human. Almighty God has said:

وَلَا يَغْتَب بَّعْضُكُم بَعْضًا أَيُحِبُّ أَحَدُكُمْ أَن يَأْكُلَ لَحْمَ أَخِيهِ مَيْتًا فَكَرِهْتُمُوهُ

...And do not backbite one another. Will any of you love to eat the flesh of his dead brother? You would hate it.[2]

Regarding the prohibition of backbiting and the necessity to avoid it there are many Narrations attributed to the holy Prophet (ṣ) and the infallible Imams (ʿa), some of which are as follows:

1. The holy Prophet of God (ṣ) has said:

   Backbiting ruins the religion of a Muslim even quicker than gangrene ruins the organs of the body.[3]

2. Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) has said:

   Backbiting is telling something about a brother that

1– *UÒūl al-Kāfī,* vol. 2 p. 358; *Surah Nūr* 24:19.
2– *Surah Íujurāt* 49:12.
3– *UÒūl al-Kāfī,* vol. 2 p. 341.

God has concealed.[1]

3. Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) has also said:

> Do not backbite or you will be a victim of backbiting, do not dig a pit for your brother because you may fall into it, and be aware that you will be judged the way you have judged others.[2]

Backbiting creates hatred and enmity. It damages unity and promotes mistrust among Muslims as well as many other bad attitudes that tear the solidarity of Muslims apart. Jurists consider backbiting whoever engages in debauchery overtly and with pride as an exception. Consequently, it is permitted to talk about those who publicly commit sins such as drinking wine. However, such a person cannot be defamed for any sin he or she is yet to commit.

The atonement for backbiting is to seek repentance from Almighty God and ask for forgiveness from the accused person if she or he is alive. If the person in question is dead, the backbiter should ask God for forgiveness for the accused person. This will serve as atonement for his backbiting. The holy Prophet (ṣ) was asked about the atonement for backbiting. He replied:

> Seek God's forgiveness for persons who you have backbitten whenever you remember them.[3]

7. Mockery

This means ridiculing and degrading a person in order to make others laugh. The holy Qur'ān has warned us against doing this and Almighty God has announced His anger against those who commit mockery. He has said:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا يَسْخَرْ قَومٌ مِّن قَوْمٍ عَسَى أَن يَكُونُوا خَيْرًا مِّنْهُمْ وَلَا

1– *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 2, p. 267.
2– *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 72, p. 248; also *Am'Alī al-Suduq*, p. 420.
3– *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 72, p. 249; also *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 2, p. 357.

نِسَاء مِّن نِّسَاء عَسَى أَن يَكُنَّ خَيْرًا مِّنْهُنَّ

O you who have faith! Let not any people ridicule another people: it may be that they are better than they are; nor let women [ridicule] women: it may be that they are better than they are.[1]

He has also said:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ أَجْرَمُوا كَانُواْ مِنَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا يَضْحَكُونَ وَإِذَا مَرُّواْ بِهِمْ يَتَغَامَزُونَ وَإِذَا انقَلَبُواْ إِلَى أَهْلِهِمُ انقَلَبُواْ فَكِهِينَ وَإِذَا رَأَوْهُمْ قَالُوا إِنَّ هَؤُلَاء لَضَالُّونَ

Indeed the guilty used to laugh at the faithful, and when they passed them by they would wink at each other, and when they returned to their folks they would return jesting, and when they saw them they would say, 'Indeed those are the astray!' [2]

The holy Prophet (ṣ) and members of his household (ʿa) have criticized this attribute. Below are some of their Narrations in this respect:

1. The holy Prophet (ṣ) has said:

> O Ibn Masʿūd, they reproach anybody who is bound by my tradition and God's commandments. As God has said:
>
> فَاتَّخَذْتُمُوهُمْ سِخْرِيًّا
>
> *But then you took them by ridicule…"*[3]

2. Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) has said:

> A mocker shall never expect truthful affection from

1– *Surah Íujurāt* 49:11.
2– *Surah MuÔaffifin* 83:29-32.
3– *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 77, p. 102; and *Surah Mu'minūn* 23:110.

people.[1]

3. Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) has also said:

> Whoever degrades a believer, poor or otherwise, shall be eternally degraded and humiliated by God until he or she refrains from their degradation.[2]

Thus has Islam applied the most precautionary of measures in order to safeguard human dignity. It has forbidden humiliating human beings or destroying their reputation so that everyone lives respectfully and safe from enmity.

8. Fault-finding and Usage of Indecent Titles

Another type of utterance detested by Islam is fault-finding and attribution of indecent titles to one another. Fault-finding means listing the shortcomings of a person in his or her presence in order to degrade him. Such attitude leads to enmity and hostility and that negates the Islamic brotherhood founded by the holy Prophet of Islam (ṣ).

Attributing indecent titles means calling a Muslim brother or sister by an improper name, whether the title is related to the person themselves, to their father, or to any of their relatives since this causes enmity and hatred among people. Indeed, God has prohibited these two attributes in His book when He said:

وَلَا تَلْمِزُوا أَنفُسَكُمْ وَلَا تَنَابَزُوا بِالْأَلْقَابِ بِئْسَ الِاسْمُ الْفُسُوقُ بَعْدَ الْإِيمَانِ وَمَن لَّمْ يَتُبْ فَأُوْلَئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ

And do not defame one another, nor insult one another by [calling] nicknames. How evil are profane names subsequent to faith! And whoever is not penitent –such are the wrongdoers.[3]

1– *Bihār al-Anwar*, vol. 75, p. 144.
2– *Ibid*, vol. 72, p. 52; also *al-Kāfī*, vol. 2, p. 262.
3– *Surah Ĥujurāt* 49:11.

9. Vain Talk

Vain talk is another type of utterance that is detested by Islam. Islam wants Muslims to desist from it. It comprises idle talk and joking in speech and in action. This has been mentioned in the holy Qur'ān several times where God is describing his close servants. He has said:

وَإِذَا سَمِعُوا اللَّغْوَ أَعْرَضُوا عَنْهُ وَقَالُوا لَنَا أَعْمَالُنَا وَلَكُمْ أَعْمَالُكُمْ سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ لَا نَبْتَغِي الْجَاهِلِينَ

And when they hear vain talk, they avoid it and say, 'Our deeds belong to us, and your deeds belong to you. Peace be to you. We do not court the ignorant.'[1]

He has also said:

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي صَلَاتِهِمْ خَاشِعُونَ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنِ اللَّغْوِ مُعْرِضُونَ

Certainly, the faithful have attained salvation –those who are humble in their prayers and who avoid vain talk...[2]

The Most High has also said while describing His pious servants:

وَإِذَا مَرُّوا بِاللَّغْوِ مَرُّوا كِرَامًا

...and when they come upon vain talk, pass by nobly.[3]

One of the dignifying factors for Muslims that Islam has called for is to refrain from idle talk since it creates hatred among Muslims and wastes a lot of time without any benefit. It is evident that such foul habits are the results of indolence, joblessness, and lack of proper thought and culture.

1– *Surah Qasas* 28:55.
2– *Surah Mu'minūn* 23:13.
3– *Surah Furqān* 25:72.

10. Imprecation and Badmouthing

Another type of unaccepted and banned utterances in Islam is imprecation. No one uses swearwords except despicable people that are immersed in ignorance and sins.

The holy Prophet (ṣ) and the Members of his Household (ʿa) have greatly criticized obscenity. The holy Prophet (ṣ) has depreciated it saying:

> God has prohibited Paradise to shameless users of obscene language that do not care about what they say regarding others and about what is said regarding themselves.[1]

The holy Prophet of God (ṣ) has said:

> The worst of God's servants are persons whose company is not pleasant because of their vulgar words.[2]

3. Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) has said:

> Whoever people are afraid of because of their tongues shall abide in hellfire.[3]

4. Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) has said to a group of Shiites:

> O you Shiites, be our ornament and be not a disgrace to us. Talk to people in a pleasant way, and take care with your tongues, and keep them from vain and vile talk.[4]

Badmouthing people saying bad things about others and accusing them of prohibited things and thus it is a prohibited act. Reporters of Ḥadith have cited about Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) that the Imam had a friend who was always with him. The Imam went somewhere and he was accompanied by his friend as

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1– *Al-Wāfī*, vol. 2, p. 160; *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 2, p. 323.
2– *UÒūl al-Kāfī,* vol. 2, p. 313.
3– *Ibid*, p. 315.
4– *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 68, p. 310.

usual. This friend of the Imam had a slave named Sindī who was following him. He did not see his slave after calling him for three times, and at the forth time, he angrily said to him: "Where are you, son of a sinful woman?"

The Imam became angry for his statement and said: "Glory be to God! Do you defame his mother? Indeed I thought you were a pious man, but now I have found there is no piousness in you." The man said: "May my soul be sacrificed for you, but his mother is a Sindī polytheist." However, the Imam did not accept his excuse and said to him: "Get away from me! Do you not know that every nation has a marriage?" Then the Imam separated from him and never associated with him again.

A defamed person has the right to complain to a judge in order to implement the measures stipulated by jurists.

With this we conclude the laws regarding speech in Islam. Indeed Islam has enacted the most splendid laws in this regard and deals with all its types.

Walking

Walking is one of the necessities of life. By walking, human beings strive on earth and work for their livelihood and that of their family. Islam has defined the most distinguished manners and laws in this regard. Some of them are as follows:

How to Walk

Islam has taught that we should walk in a gentle way and without pride, arrogance, and selfishness. God the Most High has said:

وَلاَ تَمْشِ فِي الأَرْضِ مَرَحًا إِنَّكَ لَن تَخْرِقَ الأَرْضَ وَلَن تَبْلُغَ الْجِبَالَ طُولًا

Do not walk on the earth with conceit and arrogance. Indeed you will neither pierce the earth, nor reach the mountains in height.[1]

1– *Surah Isrā'* 17:37.

This verse means that people should not walk on the earth like a powerful and arrogant person because no matter how strong the steps you take, you can never break the earth and no matter how great your pride, you can never reach the height of the mountains.

God the Most High has said:

وَلَا تَمْشِ فِي الْأَرْضِ مَرَحًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ مُخْتَالٍ فَخُورٍ

And do not walk exultantly on the earth. Indeed Allah does not like any swaggering braggart.[1]

Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) has narrated from his ancestor, the Messenger of God (ṣ), who when passing by a group of people asked of them: "What is the purpose of your gathering?"

"O Messenger of God! We are gathered here to watch this insane man."

The holy Prophet said: "He is not insane, he is an afflicted person. Do you want me to clarify real insanity to you?"

"Yes, O Messenger of God."

"Those who walk swaggeringly, seeing only themselves, swinging their shoulders, and hope for Paradise from Allah while they disobey Him. Those whom there is no peace from their evils and there is no hope for any good from them. That is an insane person while the man you are watching is an afflicted person."[2]

Walking arrogantly stems from the ignorance and pride of a person. Hakim "al-Muʿarrah" addresses humans saying:

> "Walk gently because I do not see the crust of the earth as anything but corpses."

Īlyā Abu Māḍī has written:

1– *Surah Luqmān* 31:18.
2– *Wasā'il ash-Shī'ah*, vol. 5, p. 44.

> The mud forgot for a moment that it was insignificant mud thus it became proud and rebelled.
>
> Silk covered its body and it became haughty; its pocket became full of money and it transgressed.

Indeed humans are created from mud. Their bodies will be covered by the earth. How can a person be taken with pride, despotism, and tyranny such that he or she digresses from uprightness to the extent that the person sees nobody deserving of life except herself or himself. An example of this is the story of a man in fine clothes that came to the holy Prophet (ṣ) and sat beside him. Then a poor man who was clothed in rags arrived and sat beside the rich man. The rich man looked at the clothes of the poor man and distanced himself from him fearing that he might be affected by the dirtiness of the poor man's clothes. This upset the holy Prophet (ṣ) who said to him:

> "Are you afraid of being affected by the wretchedness of this man?"

"No," the rich man said.

"Then are you afraid of your clothes becoming dirty?"

"No."

"What has prompted you to do that?"

He stood up answering with truth saying:

"O Messenger of God! I have a companion -Satan- that beautifies evil deeds for me and makes what is good seem bad to me. Indeed I shall bestow half of my property upon this man."

The holy Prophet looked at the poor man and inquired from him whether he would accept the offer.

"No, O Messenger of God," he replied.

"Why will you not accept the offer?"

The poor man replied: “I am afraid of getting affected by pride like this man.”

There was a dispute between Salmān Fārsī and an Arab man. Trying to ridicule Salman, the Arab man told him:

“Who are you anyway, Salman?”

He answered him with logic and faith:

“My beginning and yours was filthy semen. My ending and yours shall be stinking carcasses. When the Day of Judgment comes our actions shall be set upon a balancing scale. He whose scale weighs down is virtuous and he whose scale weighs light is wicked.”[1]

Another example is that of an arrogant young man from the Umayyad clan. He was walking in a prideful and dominant manner when he met a preacher who admonished him thus: “Why all this pride from you while walking?”

The Umayyad shouted at him violently, saying:

“Do you know who I am?”

“Yes, I know you: Your beginning is filthy semen and your ending is a stinking carcass and throughout your life you carry filth within yourself.”

He then left.

An Umayyad king saw himself in a mirror and was allured by it. While he was taken by pride he ordered a lady singer to his palace. When she came before him, he asked her, “Is there anyone in the world like me in youthfulness, health, and kingliness?” She replied, “You are the best if you remain eternally; however, there is no immortality for human beings.”

Before several days had passed the earth accepted his body and his pride and kingliness were obscured by the earth.

1– *Amālī aÒ-Ñadūq*, p. 610.

Shawqī has said:

> Pride abandons the companions of pride and indeed pass away;
>
> And the sovereignty of rulers is buried within the earth.

Methods of Walking

Walking is of different types, some are considered to be obedience to God while others are sinful. Below this is explained further.

Obedience to God

This is also of differing types. Some of which are compulsory while others are recommended.

A. Compulsory Aspects of Walking

It is compulsory for a man to walk and struggle for his living and that of his family. It is not proper for him to sit in his house waiting for his sustenance. Indeed, Almighty Allah has ordered us to struggle for our livelihood.

The Most High has said:

هُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ الْأَرْضَ ذَلُولًا فَامْشُوا فِي مَنَاكِبِهَا وَكُلُوا مِن رِّزْقِهِ

It is He who made the earth tractable for you; so walk on its flanks and eat of His provision.[1]

It is also compulsory to search for water when there is lack of it for ablution or for the *janabah* ritual bath, because it is incumbent upon persons to perform ablution. This is referred to as a conditional obligation by scholars of jurisprudence since it only becomes obligatory when water is needed for another obligatory act such as ablution.

Another example of struggling and walking on the earth is endeavoring to prepare for Ḥajj for those having the ability since it is compulsory for a person to prepare so that they may

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1– *Surah Mulk* 67:15.

travel to the sacred house of Allah.

B. Recommended Aspects of Walking

As for the recommended types of walking, there are different kinds that Islamic law has encouraged. Among them are:

1. Walking to the Sacred House of Allah

Among the recommended acts that bring humans closer to Almighty Allah is walking to His Sacred House (i.e. the *Ka'bah*). Verily, Imam Ḥasan and his brother, Imam Husayn (ʿa), Chief of the Martyrs, made Pilgrimage to the Sacred House of Allah on foot while mounted pilgrims rode on ahead which was very difficult for the mounted pilgrims. They spoke with Saʿd ibn Abī Waqqās asking him to tell the two grandsons of the holy Prophet (ʿa) to either mount their camels or keep away from the road because it is not good conduct to be mounted while the grandsons of the holy Prophet (ṣ) are walking on foot. Saʿd talked with them on this matter and both of them replied: "We are inclined to walk to the Sacred House of Allah while they are inclined to ride. Therefore we will keep away from this road." So they continued their journey on foot on another road.

2. Walking to Visit Imam Ḥusain (ʿa)

It is strongly recommended to go to visit the Flower of the holy Prophet (ṣ), the Leader of the Youth of Paradise, Imam Ḥusain (ʿa) by foot. Visiting Imam Ḥusain is regarded as one of the highest forms of worship of God among the Shīʿah. Its reward surpasses even that of a recommended Pilgrimage. There are numerous Narrations in this respect from the guiding lights of Islam, the Infalible Imams (ʿa). Ibn Qaūlawayh has transmitted many Narrations in his *Kāmil az-Ziyārah* regarding the virtue of visiting Imam Ḥusain (ʿa) and has counted it as one of devotions that entail great rewards.

The following are among such Narrations:

a. It was reported from Ḥusain ibn Abī Fākhitah that Abī Abdullāh (ʿa) said:

> O Ḥusain! Whoever comes out of his house tending to visit the tomb of Ḥusain ibn ʿAlī (ʿa), if they trek on foot, every step a good act will written by Allah for them and a bad act of theirs will be erased until they reach the grave whereby the person will be written among the redeemed and the saved. Finally when the person accomplishes the rituals of pilgrimage he or she will be written among the triumphant.[1]

b. Abu Saʿīd al-Qāḍī reported: "I went to Abī Abdullāh in his small room and Murāzim was with him. I heard Abī Abdullāh (ʿa) saying:

> Whoever comes to the tomb of Imam Ḥusain on foot, for every step they take and every footfall there will be written the rewards of liberating from bondage a slave of the progeny of Ismāʿīl.[2]

Some scholars from the city of Qum have written a valuable book under the title of *Faḍl al-Mashy li-Ziyārat al-Imām al-Ḥusaīn* (ʿa) (*The Virtue of Walking to Visit Imām Ḥusaīn*). In this book they mentioned numerous authentic Narrations that describe the tremendous reward for those that journey on foot to visit Imam Ḥusain (ʿa).

3. Fulfilling the Requests of People

Among the recommended acts is to strive and walk in order to fulfill the requests of people. Historians have reported that Imam al-Ḥasan (ʿa), the Flower of Allah's Messenger (ṣ), was circumambulating the Sacred House of Allah when a man came to him with a request for help. The Imam (ʿa) cut short his circumambulation and quickly went to fulfill the man's need because this is better than circumambulation. Also, when a person came to Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) requesting him to do something he quickly went to carry it out. It was asked of him, "Why such trekking rapid pace?" He (ʿa) answered: "I fear someone else

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1– *Kāmil az-Ziyārāt*, p. 253.
2– *Ibid*, p. 257.

will fulfill his request before me and I will miss the reward."

Prohibited Walking

It is prohibited to walk in some situations although the prohibition is due to the occurrence of a secondary decree and such prohibition supersedes the primary decree regarding walking which is permission according scholars of jurisprudence. The following are some examples of this:

Slandering a Believer:

Among the most indecent prohibitions which carries severe punishment before Almighty Allah is to strive and walk to ruin a believer in the pavilion of an oppressor. Definitely no one can do such a thing except those who completely lack nobility and humanity. How plenty are such persons in all eras throughout history. Such people have slandered Imam Mūsā ibn Jaʿfar (ʿa) before the infidel Hārūn who sent him to prison until he died there of poison. Also, Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) was slandered before the infidel Manṣūr Dawāniqī.

Verily a slanderer is the most ignoble person in existence and slandering is the most dangerous crime and evil. It was reported from Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) quoting from his grandfather, the Messenger of Allah (ṣ), that he said: "The evilest among people is the triangle." He was asked: "What is the triangle?"

He said: "He who speaks ill of his brother to those in authority. By doing so he ruins himself, his brother, and those in authority."[1]

In explanation, such a person ruins those in authority because he caused them to oppress an innocent believer. The restitution of those in authority is punishment by Allah the Most High. As for the destruction of the slanderer, it is very obvious because he caused the believer to be oppressed. His reward is also severe punishment by Almighty Allah.

1– *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol 72, p. 429.

Indeed, whoever walks in order to commit a sin such as drinking alcohol or any other atrocity will definitely be punished by Almighty Allah. The same pertains to one who travels to commit a prohibited act. Surely, such journeys are regarded as sinful and according to law of jurisprudence the traveler must observe his or her prayer fully, as opposed to the shortened traveler's prayers, during the journey. These are some of the examples concerning prohibited walking. The prohibition in these cases is not due walking itself, rather it derives from the aims of the walk and punishment will be the result of such aims. For instance, in the case of walking somewhere in order to drink alcohol, the walk is a preliminary to drinking alcohol and is therefore forbidden.

FRIENDS, NEIGHBORS AND RELATIVES

Friendship is among the social affairs that human beings cannot do without in any situation. This is because humans are not able to live apart from the society and be secluded from people without intimacy and friends that share their tendencies and inclinations; friends that will condole with them in times of pain and problems. Surely, any persons living apart from society are affected with dejection and abnormality. By looking into the importance of friendship in social relations that are regarded as part of Islamic life, it is evident that Islam has attached great importance to social life, friendship, and the necessary attributes to be found in a friend. It has also thrown light on other affairs concerning friendship. These matters we shall discuss in the following pages.

The Importance of Friendship

Friendship is the adornment of worldly life that was bestowed upon human beings. It is the most important achievement that is obtained by humans because it concerns their thought and social life. It has been said to Muʿāwiyah ibn Abī Sufyān when he became king that, you have attained all types of worldly things, is there anything else you wish to attain? He replied: "Indeed, sitting together with friends and exchanging views with them."

Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) has said: "Surely the rank of friendship is very great to the extent that those condemned to the hellfire shall

seek out their assistance and implore them for salvation."[1]

Almighty Allah, quoting those condemned to Hell, has said:

فَمَا لَنَا مِن شَافِعِينَ وَلَا صَدِيقٍ حَمِيمٍ

Now we have no intercessors, nor do we have any sympathetic friend.[2]

It was said to a wise man: "Who did you like most, your brother or your friend?" He said: "I love my brother if he is an intimate friend to me."

Whom Should We Befriend?

The holy Qur'ān has guided us to befriend the best of people and those who act only within the bounds of their religion. Almighty Allah has said:

وَاصْبِرْ نَفْسَكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُم بِالْغَدَاةِ وَالْعَشِيِّ يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَهُ وَلَا تَعْدُ عَيْنَاكَ عَنْهُمْ تُرِيدُ زِينَةَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَلَا تُطِعْ مَنْ أَغْفَلْنَا قَلْبَهُ عَن ذِكْرِنَا وَاتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ وَكَانَ أَمْرُهُ فُرُطًا

Content yourself with the company of those who supplicate their Lord morning and evening, desiring His Face, and do not lose sight of them, desiring the glitter of the life of this world. And Do not obey him whose heart We have made oblivious to Our remembrance, and who follows his own desires, and whose conduct is [mere] profligacy.[3]

Allah has ordered us with this holy verse to befriend pious persons to adopt their virtue and good manners and to emulate their morals. Almighty Allah in this respect has said:

فَأَعْرِضْ عَن مَّن تَوَلَّى عَن ذِكْرِنَا وَلَمْ يُرِدْ إِلَّا الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا

1– *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 71, p. 180.
2– *Surah Shu'arā'* 26:100-101.
3– *Surah Kahf* 18:28.

So avoid those who turn away from Our remembrance and desire nothing but the life of the world.[1]

Verily the good friend is the explorer of good; one that calls for reformation and who is a trusted guide in achieving virtues and good manners.

The Psychological Impact of a Friend

What is most emphasized is that persons have great influence in defining the life of their friends in terms of thought, society, and politics. It was said by a poet:

> Do not inquire about the behavior of a person but about that of his friend; because every person imitates their companion.

An Arab teacher has said:

> Do not mix one who is affected by scabies with healthy ones, lest the healthy ones also become affected with scabies.

Verily, a friend has an effect on the thought of their friend and vise visa. It is said in sociology that social life is a life of mutual influences; that every human is influenced by those surrounding them and in turn they are also influenced by others.

Noble Attributes

Islam has encouraged friendship with those that possess noble attributes and exalted manners. These attributes are as follows:

The Truthful

The Commander of the Faithful (ʿa) has said:

> I advise you to friendship with truthful brothers and sisters in faith. Pursue them greatly because they are at your disposition in times of comfort and your shelter in times of affliction.[2]

1– *Surah Najm* 53:29.
2– *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 71, p. 187.

Truthfulness in speech and action is the best habit to describe a human being. Moreover, a person who is described with truthfulness is a good exemplar to others.

The Trustworthy

The Commander of the Faithful (ʿa) has encouraged people to befriend with the trustworthy. In one of his Narrations he (ʿa) has said:

> As for trustworthy persons, they are [helping] hands, wings, family, and treasures. If you have trust in a friend devote your wealth and your soul to him or her. Be friends with the friends of your friend and be enemies with the enemies of your friend. Conceal her or his secrets and shortcomings and manifest his or her good attributes. Know that such persons are rarer than red sulfur.[1]

Trustworthy persons are adornments of humanity and blessings of the society. Having connection with them is good and brings about blessings. They are the leaders toward Almighty Allah's pleasure and obedience. Thus human beings can achieve from them the good of this world and the hereafter.

Detestable Attributes

Islam detests the befriending of a person that is marked by a detestable attribute. In this respect Imam Zayn al-Ābidīn (ʿa), the Master of Worshipers, has named some of these attributes in his will to his son, Imam Bāqir. He (ʿa) has said:

> O son! Be wary of five types of people and do not befriend them. Do not mingle with them and do not accompany them.

Imam Bāqir stood up asking: "Who are these five types of people, O father?" He replied:

> Be careful and do not befriend liars because they are like a mirage that makes far things seem close and

1– *Al-Wāfī*, vol. 3, p. 105; also *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 2, p. 242.

> close things seem far. Be aware and do not befriend immoral persons because they shall sell you for a meal or even for less. Be wary and do not befriend misers because they will abandon you in times you need them the most. Be aware and do not befriend unwise persons because they will afflict you when they want to assist you. Be aware and do not befriend persons who break off relations with their family because I found them cursed by Almighty Allah in three places in His Book.[1]

There is no good in these types of people because having friendship with them causes woe and regret. They cause the calamities the holy Imam has referred to for those who befriend them. In a similar manner, a believer must not befriend and love those who transgress against the limits of Allah and His Messenger, even though they are the closest person to you.

The Most High has declared:

لَا تَجِدُ قَوْمًا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ يُوَادُّونَ مَنْ حَادَّ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَلَوْ كَانُوا آبَاءهُمْ أَوْ أَبْنَاءهُمْ أَوْ إِخْوَانَهُمْ أَوْ عَشِيرَتَهُمْ

You will not find a people believing in Allah and the Last Day endearing those who oppose Allah and His Apostle even though they were their own parents, or children, or brothers, or kinsfolk.[2]

The Messenger of Allah (ṣ) has said:

> Whoever believes in Allah and the Day of Judgment should not take unbelievers as their friends and should not mingle with immoral persons. Those that take unbelievers as friends or mingle with immoral persons are unbelievers and immoral persons

1– *Al-Wāfī*, vol. 3, p. 105; also *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 2, pp. 375-376.
2– *Surah Mujādilah* 58:22.

themselves.[1]

It is incumbent upon believers to distance themselves from these attributes which have no connection with Allah the Most High. Befriending such people draws tremendous manifest loss to you. In fact, the Messenger of Allah has said:

> A person's religion is relies on that of his or her intimate friend. So everyone should be careful of whom they befriend.[2]

The Definition of Friendship

Speaking about the definition of friendship and its characteristics, Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) has stated:

> There is no friendship without these characteristics. Whoever encompasses these characteristics, friendship should be ascribed to them. Friendship should not be ascribed to those who do not hold these properties.
>
> **First:** Their heart and appearance should be one before you [i.e. a friend should be sincere].
>
> **Second:** They should consider your merits as their own merits and also your faults as their own faults.
>
> **Third:** No position or wealth should change their behavior with you.
>
> **Fourth:** They should not prevent you from attaining something that they have within their grasp.
>
> **Fifth:** In addition to having all these attributes they should not forsake you when in catastrophe.[3]

This definition is among the noble attributes for those who have trained themselves with nobility and perfection.

Mutual Rights in Friendship

1– Shaykh Sadūq, *Sifat ash-Shī'a*, p. 6.
2– *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 71, p. 192.
3– *Al-Wāfi*, vol. 3, p. 104; also *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 2, p. 639.

There are numbers of rights that must be observed in friendship. The Commander of the Faithful (ʿa) has mentioned many such rights in his will (testament) to his son Imam Ḥasan (ʿa). He has said:

> Compel yourself to keep relations with your friends when they are breaking relations with you. Compel yourself to be affectionate and close to your friends when they keep their affections from you. Compel yourself to be generous with them when they keep their generosity from you. Compel yourself to become closer to them when they distance themselves from you. Compel yourself to be compassionate with them when they are in a rage. When they make a mistake regarding you make them apologize with your good behavior as if you were their servant and they the master.

He continued thus:

> Do not befriend the enemy of your friend because it will cause enmity with your friend and be sincere towards him or her in advice for his or her actions whether the advice is good or unpleasant.

In another part of his will he has said:

> If you want to break relations with your friend leave something of yourself with them as a reminder whenever they perceive it. Whenever someone has a good opinion towards you make their opinions reality. In honor of the relationship that exists between you and your friend do not violate the rights of your friend because those whose rights you violate are not your friends.[1]

Did you observe these golden advices that show the civilization in Islam and the magnificent rights of a friend?

1– *Nahj al-Balāghah*, ʿAlī's *(ʿa)* will to his son Íasan *(ʿa)*, p. 403.

Elsewhere regarding friends, he has said:

> A friend cannot be regarded as a friend until they protect their friend in three occasions: in calamity, in absence, and after death.[1]

These are the criteria that differentiate a loyal friend from unfaithful ones whose friendship is worthless.

A Word of Advice for Friends

It is not advisable for persons to divulge all their secrets to their friends because there is no guarantee that the minds of a friend will not change and that Satan will not cast enmity and rancor between them resulting in the friend divulging a secret or bad act that was committed. In this respect Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) has advised some of his companion thus:

> Do not inform your friend of your secret except such information that when it gets to your enemy it cannot harm you. Because, a friend may one day become your enemy.[2]

Imam Zayn al-Ābidīn (ʿa) has mentioned the rights of friends within his *Epistle of Rights*. He (ʿa) has said:

> Regarding the rights of a friend, make friendship with prestige as much as you can, or at least be fair to your friend, respect your friend as he or she has respected you, and protect him as he has protected you. Also, you should not let your friend outstrip you in reverence and affection. If he or she does surpass you, you must make it up then. Do not curtail the cordiality your friend deserves. Compel yourself to advise your friend and assist him or her in obedience to the Lord and against negligence concerning disobedience to the Lord. Become a blessing to your friend, not a cause of agony. There is no strength

1– *Wasā'il ash-Shī'ah*, vol. 12, p. 26.
2– *Ibid*, vol. 2, p. 146.

except that of Allah.[1]

Neighborliness

Islam has treated all the affairs relating to human beings with care and wisdom. It has not left out any area of human life and has prepared splendid laws that put an end to our problems. Islam has prepared a secure and firm life for us, suffused with love and harmony. Neighborhood is among the sensitive issues through which a person can become either blessed or wretched. This is because if neighbors are believers and noble persons, their neighborhood will be a blessing. However, a neighbor that is ignoble and deviant in manner will draw woe and cause damage unto neighbors. Also, such neighbors will be a source of plague and punishment to for others in the area such that the neighbors of such persons will not have peace of mind except in their absence.

The virtue of a neighbor has a close connection with the cohesiveness of the society, which is one of the most important, concrete aims that are sought by Islam.

Neighborhood According to the Qur'ān

The holy Qur'ān advises us to protect and do good to our neighbors. The Most High has said:

وَاعْبُدُواْ اللّهَ وَلاَ تُشْرِكُواْ بِهِ شَيْئًا وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا وَبِذِي الْقُرْبَى وَالْيَتَامَى وَالْمَسَاكِينِ وَالْجَارِ ذِي الْقُرْبَى وَالْجَارِ الْجُنُبِ وَالصَّاحِبِ بِالجَنبِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ وَمَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ

Worship Allah and do not ascribe any partners to Him, and be good to parents, the relatives, the orphans, the needy, the near neighbor and the distant neighbor, the companion at your side, the traveler, and your slaves.[2]

1– *Risālah al-Huqūq*, vol. 2, p. 78.
2– *Surah Nisā'* 4:36.

Verily Almighty Allah has bid us to be kind to close and distant neighbors, and He has also associated goodness to neighbors with servitude to Him, goodness to parents, orphans, the poor and to travelers.

Neighborhood According to the Tradition of the Holy Prophet

There are numerous Narrations from the holy Prophet (ṣ) and the guided Imams from his holy Household (ʿa) concerning goodness to neighbors. Below are some of these Narrations:

1. The Messenger of Allah (ṣ) has said:
   Kindness to neighbors makes the land thrive with people and extends the life span.[1]

2. The Messenger of Allah (ṣ) has said:
   A person is not of my community who sleeps satiated while his neighbor is hungry. Allah shall not bestow His blessing on the Day of Judgment to people of a village where a person slept in hunger.[2]

3. The Messenger of Allah (ṣ) has said:
   Angel Gabriel did continuously admonished me concerning neighbors until I suspected that neighbors might inherit from each other.[3]

4- Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) has said:
   Verily, when Benjamin [Binyāmin] parted from Prophet Jacob [Yaʿqub] (ʿa), he called out: "O Lord, shall You not have mercy on me? You have taken my sight from me and my son as well?" Then Allah the Most High revealed unto him: "If I take their lives, I will surely resurrect them and reunite you. However, remember the sheep you slaughtered, roasted, and ate while some persons who were fasting were close to you without you giving them of it?[4]

1– *Al-Wāfī*, vol. 3, p. 96; also *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 2, p. 667
2– *Al-Wāfī*, vol. 3, p. 96; also *Wasā'il ash-Shī'ah*, vol. 12, p. 129.
3– *Al-Wāfī*, vol. 3, p. 96, also *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 17, p. 8.
4– *Al-Wāfī*, vol. 3, p. 97; also *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 2, vol. 667.

See how the holy Prophet (ṣ) and his Household (ʿa) have paid attention to neighbors and the necessity to do well by them?

The Definition of Neighbor

Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) has reported from his grandfather, the Messenger of Allah (ṣ), the definition of neighbor. He defined it as forty houses to the right, left, back and front of your house.[1]

The Neighbors of Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa)

Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) had a neighbor in Medina who was in a state of need and was forced to sell his house at half its real cost. It was said to him that this price is equivalent to half of the worth of this house. He replied: "There is a neighbor here that is worth the second half because there is no one like him in this world." This answer reached the Imam who sent the neighbor all he needed and kept him as his neighbor.

The Supplication of Imam Zayn al-Ābidīn (ʿa) for His Neighbors

Among the sublime behaviors of Imam Zayn al-Ābidīn (ʿa), the Master of Worshipers, was his supplication for his neighbors. He (ʿa) has prayed thus:

> O Allah, bless Muḥammad and his Household and attend to me with Thy best attending in regard with my neighbors and friends who recognize our right and war against our enemies! Give [my neighbors and friends] success in performing Thy prescriptions and taking on the beauties of Thy courtesy through acting gently with their weak, remedying their lacks, visiting their sick, guiding their seeker of right guidance, giving good counsel to their seeker of advice, attending to the one among them who returns from travel, hiding their secrets, covering over their shameful things, helping their wronged, sharing kindly with them in goods, turning toward them with wealth and bestowal of bounty, and giving what is due

1– *Al-Wāfi*, vol. 3, p. 97.

> to them before they ask! Let me, O Allah, repay their evil doer with good doing, turn away from their wrongdoer with forbearance, have a good opinion of every one of them, attend to all of them with devotion, lower my eyes before them in continence, make mild my side toward them in humanity, be tender toward the afflicted among them in mercy, make them happy in absence through affection, love that they continue to receive favor through good will, grant them what I grant my next of kin, and observe for them what I observe for my special friends! O Allah, bless Muḥammad and his Household, provide me the like of that from them, appoint for me the fullest share of what is with them, and increase them in insight towards my right and knowledge of my excellence so that they will be fortunate through me and I fortunate through them! Amen, Lord of the worlds.[1]

Behold the lofty behavior, the virtuous morals, and the angelic spirit of this great Imam in whom can be seen the pure soul of the Messenger of Allah (ṣ).

Verily, this is the great and inspired Imam from the pure progeny of Muḥammad (ṣ). He is a treasure of Islam and is among the masters of the pure progeny, the equal of the holy Qur'ān and the guiding light of Islam.

A Wonderful Story

I read in an ethics book about a person who had animosity against his neighbor and wished for the abatement of his wealth and for him to fall into calamity. Therefore, he bought a slave and bestowed great generosity upon him but he requested his slave to slaughter him on top of his neighbor's house so that the blame will be cast upon the neighbor. Thus the slave climbed to the top of the neighbor's house and started slaughtering the

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1– *Ñaḥīfah al-Sajjādiyyah*, supplication 26, English translation by William C. Chittick in *The Psalms of Islam* with minor alterations.

man. The neighbor quickly went to the top of the house when he heard something where he saw the slave facing down and slaughtering his neighbor. He apprehended him and handed the slave over to the security men. The slave retold the story of his master and was pardoned. Thus, the man's blood was spilled in vain. This is how stupidity and ignorance causes abominable acts.

Absence of Relations between Neighbors in the West

The western society lives a life in which the relationship among family members and neighbors is obliterated. There is no familiarity or connection between neighbors and between parents and their children. They separate from their mothers and fathers when they attain the age of eighteen, whether male or female. Thus, they indulge themselves in luxury play and prostitution.

As for the fathers and mothers, they take dogs as their companions when they become advanced in age and the municipality buries them when they die. Is this the civilization which they disseminate in their mass media?

Surely the civilization which was bestowed upon humans is that of Islam and not the Westerners, which have strived to invade weak countries and plunder their economic strength.

Blood Relations

It is greatly stressed that the solidarity of Muslims and affectionate relations within the family is the primary core for uniting the entirety of Muslims which is the fundamental aim Islam seeks through the Holy Book and the Tradition of the holy Prophet (ṣ). They have strongly emphasized the necessity of keeping relations with close relatives and forgetting grudges wherein they guarantee substantial benefits, among which includes prolonged life and increase of wealth. These are two important things all humans favor.

In any case, we shall present what the holy Book of Allah and

the holy Traditions of the holy Prophet (ṣ) state in regards to encouraging people to strengthen their relationship with their relatives and warnings against breaking off ties with their relatives.

Blood Relations According to the Holy Qur'ān

The holy Qur'ān warns against breaking familial ties considering it to be a great crime and a destructive sin. The Most High has said:

فَهَلْ عَسَيْتُمْ إِن تَوَلَّيْتُمْ أَن تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَتُقَطِّعُوا أَرْحَامَكُمْ

May it not be that if you were to wield authority you would cause corruption in the land and ill-treat your blood relations?[1]

Verily in the aforementioned verse, Almighty Allah has coupled breaking relations with relatives with corruption on earth; corruption which is considered to be an abomination and crime that deserves severe punishment.

The Most High has said:

الَّذِينَ يَنقُضُونَ عَهْدَ اللَّهِ مِن بَعْدِ مِيثَاقِهِ وَيَقْطَعُونَ مَا أَمَرَ اللَّهُ بِهِ أَن يُوصَلَ وَيُفْسِدُونَ فِي الأَرْضِ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ

Those who break the covenant made with Allah after having pledged it solemnly, and sever what Allah has commanded to be joined, and cause corruption on the earth –it is they who are the losers.[2]

He has also said:

وَالَّذِينَ يَنقُضُونَ عَهْدَ اللّهِ مِن بَعْدِ مِيثَاقِهِ وَيَقْطَعُونَ مَآ أَمَرَ اللّهُ بِهِ أَن يُوصَلَ وَيُفْسِدُونَ فِي الأَرْضِ أُوْلَئِكَ لَهُمُ اللَّعْنَةُ وَلَهُمْ سُوءُ الدَّارِ

1– *Surah Muḥammad* 47:22.
2– *Surah Baqarah* 2:27.

But as for those who break Allah's compact after having pledged it solemnly, and sever what Allah has commanded to be joined, and cause corruption in the earth –it is such on whom the curse will lie, and for them will be the ills of the [ultimate] abode.[1]

Allah Almighty has definitely commanded us to uphold ties with our blood relations. Breaking this command is like breaching Allah's covenant after having pledged it solemnly. Those who do this are like those who strive to cause corruption on the earth; thus lost is their destiny.

Blood Relations According the Tradition of the Holy Prophet

The Traditions –i.e. the Narrations from the holy Prophet (ṣ) and his Household (ʿa)– emphasize the necessity of keeping relations with our blood relatives. There are two types of Traditions in this regard:

The first type: These Traditions identify the tremendous rewards and great remuneration in this world and in the hereafter for whoever maintains their ties with blood relations. Below are some of these Traditions:

1. The Messenger of Allah (ṣ) has said:

> I exhort those that are present and those that are absent –those in the loins of men and the uteruses of women until the Day of Judgment– among my nation to uphold their ties with their blood relations even if the distance is a year's journey because this is a fundamental of the Religion.[2]

2. The Messenger of Allah (ṣ) has said:

> Whoever guarantees me one thing I will surely guarantee them four things: Whoever observes family ties, Almighty Allah will love them, He will proliferate their wealth, He will increase their lifespan, and He

1– *Surah Ra'd* 13:25.
2– *Al-Wāfi*, vol. 3, p. 93; also *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 2, p. 151.

will grant them entrance into the promised Paradise.[1]

3. The Messenger of Allah (ṣ) has said:

> Whoever desires that Almighty Allah prolongs his lifespan and broadens his wealth should observe ties with their relations because the abstraction of family shall have a fluent tongue on the Day of Judgment. It will say: O my Lord! Uphold relations with whoever has upheld relations with me and break Your relation with whoever has broken relations with me.[2]

4. A man came to the holy Messenger of Allah (ṣ) complaining about his blood relations. He said: "My relations refuse me and rage against me, they have broken their relationship with me and revile me, shall I reject them?" The Prophet (ṣ) answered: "If you do so Allah will reject all of you." The man asked: "Then what is my responsibility?" The holy Prophet (ṣ) answered: "Keep your relationship with whoever breaks relations with you, give gifts to those who have kept gifts from you, and pardon whoever has oppressed you. If you do this, you have an obvious proof against them before Allah the Most High."[3]

The holy Prophet (ṣ) has bequeathed this man with the spirit of Islam, the slogan of which is kindness and benevolence. He taught him to meet injury with lenience because some of his blood relations were taken by envy and behaved in an offensive manner.

A poet has said concerning his blood relations:

> They intended to abase me and I intended to dignify my soul;
> Because I am in one valley and the censurers in another.

1– *Al-Wāfī*, vol. 3, p. 94; also *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 71, p. 68.
2– *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 2, p. 125.
3– *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 71, p. 66.

Another poet has said:

> Verily there is difference between me and my brothers and between me and my cousins;
> Though they may eat my flesh I will cause their flesh to develop;
> Though they may cause me dishonor I will build up their glory;
> Though they may transgress against me in my absence I will support them in their absence;
> Though they may discriminate against me I will guide them;
> Most of my wealth belongs to them if they desire it;
> If my wealth does not suffice I shall not demand assistance from them.

This is the nobleness, honor, and humanity that is a matter of pride and glory not only for him but also for his family and his nation.

It is emphasized that oppression to close relations is more destructive to the soul than oppression to more distant relations.

Al-Mutanabbī has said:

> Oppression to the close relatives is more harrowing to the soul than the edge of a sword.

5. Imam Abu Jaʿfar (ʿa) has said:

> To observe family ties purifies one's work, increases one's wealth, wards off evil, makes easy one's reckoning on the Day of Judgment, and extends one's life span.[1]

6. Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) has said:

> I do not know of anything that increases one's lifespan except observing family ties such that only

1– *UÒūl al-Kāfī,* vol. 2, p. 150.

three years of a person's life may remain and it will increase by thirty years, making it thirty three years by just observing family relations. On the other hand, a person's remaining lifespan may be thirty three years and will decrease to three by breaking off relations with family.[1]

7. Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) has said:

Observe your ties with your blood relations even if all you have to serve them is a mouthful of water. Know that the best type of observing familial ties is to avoid bothering them. To observe ties with relatives extends one's lifespan and makes one attractive within the family.[2]

8. Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) has said:

Verily observing ties with your blood relations and dutifulness in regard to them makes one's reckoning easy and protects one from sin; so observe relations with your relatives and be nice to your friends even if it is by a good greeting (salām) and a good reply to a greeting.[3]

There are numerous other Ḥadīth of this type that encourage Muslims to observe or to quickly mend their relationships with their kinsfolk because of its effect in increasing one's wealth, one's lifespan, and the pleasure of Almighty Allah.

The second type of Traditions: These Narrations warn Muslims about breaking their relationship with relatives and also mention its penal consequences and the damages it causes. Below are some of these Narrations:

1. The Messenger of Allah (ṣ) has said:
Four things quicken Allah's punishment: When a

1– *Ibid*, p. 152 and 153.
2– *Ibid*, vol 2, p. 151.
3– *Ibid*, vol 2, p. 157.

> person treats you evilly after you do good to them, when a person treats unjustly one who has treated them justly, when a mutual pledge is made and you fulfill it while the other betrays you, and when a person breaks relationship with a relative who has observed family ties with them.[1]

2. Imam Abu Jaʿfar (ʿa), cited from the Commander of the Faithful (ʿa) that:

> There are three attributes that those who posses them shall not die until the evil results of their actions are visited upon them. They are: treating others unjustly, breaking family ties, and giving false oath by which a person engages in war with Almighty Allah.[2]

The type of worship whose reward comes quickly is observation of family ties. A group of people can be decadent but their wealth will continue increasing if they observe family ties. Meanwhile, giving false oaths and breaking relations with relatives lays waste to one's home and sickens wombs. Indeed, illnesses of the womb cause discontinuance of progeny.

3. A man made a complaint about his relatives to Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) thus: "Definitely my brothers and my cousin have made the house tormentful for me and drove me from it. If you intervene I will take my right from them."

Imam (ʿa) ordered him to be patient saying: "Be patient, verily Almighty Allah will relieve you." The man left and after a while an epidemic disease came and killed the entire family. The man came to the Imam wherein the holy Imam inquired from him:

"What is the condition of your household?"

"All of them died without exception." The Imam said: "Their destruction was caused by their breaking of relations with you.

1– *Al-Khisal*, vol. 1, p. 230.
2– *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 2, p. 347.

"It is the consequence of what they have done to you and their oppression of you. Due to their break of relationship with you, they were deprived of posterity."[1]

4. It was reported from Shuʿayb al-Aqraqūfī, who was one of the companions of Imam Mūsā ibn Jaʿfar (ʿa), that: Yaʿqub al-Magzalī entered upon Imam Mūsā (ʿa) and the Imam said:

> O Yaʿqūb, yesterday you came upon me while you had a quarrel with your brother and insulted each other. Surely this is not my religion or the religion of my forefathers and we have not ordered anyone to possess such manners. So fear God the One who has no associate. The two of you will be separated by death, as for your brother he will die on his journey before he reaches his family and you will surely regret this because you have broken your relation with him and Almighty Allah shall shorten your lifespan.

Yaʿqub looked at the Imam (ʿa) and said: "May my soul be sacrificed for you, when will the end of my life be?"

"As for you, the end of your life has come but because you have visited with your uncle twenty years was added to your lifespan." Shu'aib said: I was later informed by Yaʿqub that his brother died before reaching his family and was buried on his way back to his family as was foreseen by the holy Imam (ʿa).[2]

Verily breaking one's relationship with relatives has multiple evil consequences among which is shortening of one's lifespan and quickening of one's ending and this is in addition to the sin that they have committed, which is breaking what Allah the Most High has ordered to be joined. A person who has broken family relations has not answered the call of Almighty Allah.

In any case, breaking one's relationship with relatives turns the house into wasteland and causes the wrath of Almighty Allah.

1– *Safīnat al-Bihār*, vol. 1, p. 516; also *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 2, p. 346.
2– *Hayāt al-Imām Mūsā ibn Ja'far ('a)*, vol. 2, pp. 264-265.

BUILDING ONE'S PERSONALITY ACCORDING TO THE ISLAMIC MODEL
(AN OVERVIEW OF ISLAMIC TRAINING)

Islam has made its invitation based on all noble attributes and exalted fundamentals that raise and elevate human beings to the height of perfection. It intends to train the minds, to reform the souls, and to teach self-denial, dissemination of virtue, and administration of services and benefits to people. The best of people is who benefits others as was narrated in Ḥadīth.

The energy of the invitation that the holy Messenger (ṣ) issued has created a noble nation and has also raised the banner of Almighty Allah. He came out victorious in this test. This energy has enlightened the intellects, illuminated the path, and guided nations and youths. It has established a standard civilization based on pure justice and truth. Its slogan is 'Wish for others what you wish for yourself and wish not for others what you wish not for yourself'. Security and comfort for all people is also part of the slogan.

Therefore, we will bring examples of Islamic fundamentals that Islam desires Muslims to adhere to.

Self-denial

A very notable issue in the Islamic model is denial of carnal desires which brings about public reformation. This is one of the attributes of the holy Prophet (ṣ) and part of his life.

It was reported by historians that a person came to the holy Prophet (ṣ) and was overcome with tremors due to veneration of the holy Prophet (ṣ). The Prophet (ṣ) reproached him thus:

> Woe unto you! Verily I am merely the son of a Quraysh woman that would eat dried meat.[1]

Behold this humbleness and negligence of material things? This is also part of the ethics of the guided Imams. They have surely emphasized its necessity in many Narrations including the following:

> Wish for others what you wish for yourself and detest for others what you detest for yourself.

Islam desires that the way of life for Muslims be based on this luminous message.

Social Consciousness

Spreading social and religious consciousness among Muslims is a manifest aspect of Islamic behavior. It is said in a clear and successive Ḥadīth that:

> Everyone is a shepherd and everyone is accountable for their herd.

It is regarded as un-Islamic for Muslims not to attach importance to the general affairs of their nation and country and it is incumbent upon Muslims to deeply follow up on the occurrences and political affairs that correspond with the benefit of Muslims and confirm them and to denounce those that detrimental to Muslims.

Among the kinds of societal consciousness is reflection on false issues and occurrences that are broadcasted by the mass media with the aim of serving the benefits of imperialists. The holy Qur'ān has ordered us not to accept news and information except after confirmation.

1– *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 6, p. 22.

The Most High has said:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِن جَاءكُمْ فَاسِقٌ بِنَبَإٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوا أَن تُصِيبُوا قَوْمًا بِجَهَالَةٍ فَتُصْبِحُوا عَلَى مَا فَعَلْتُمْ نَادِمِينَ

O you who have faith! If a profligate [person] should bring you some news, verify it, lest you should visit [harm] on some people out of ignorance, and then become regretful for what you have done.[1]

Verily, reflection on issues is among the features of Islamic training that is necessary for Muslims to know and is supposed to be their method of life.

Indeed, Islam has prohibited reliance on suspicions and acting on them.

The Most High has said:

وَمَا يَتَّبِعُ أَكْثَرُهُمْ إِلاَّ ظَنًّا إِنَّ الظَّنَّ لاَ يُغْنِي مِنَ الْحَقِّ شَيْئًا

Most of them just follow conjecture; indeed conjecture is no substitute for the truth.[2]

Almighty Allah has also condemned those who act on suspicious. He has said:

إِن يَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا الظَّنَّ وَمَا تَهْوَى الْأَنفُسُ

They follow nothing but conjectures and the desires of the [lower] soul.[3]

Conjecture which is not based on proof usually draws a person into false thoughts. Definitely atheists relied on it when denying Almighty Allah and the Day of Resurrection. Thus, according to the Qur'ān:

1– *Surah Íujurāt* 49:6.
2– *Surah Yūnus* 10:36.
3– *Surah Najm* 53:23.

وَقَالُوا مَا هِيَ إِلَّا حَيَاتُنَا الدُّنْيَا نَمُوتُ وَنَحْيَا وَمَا يُهْلِكُنَا إِلَّا الدَّهْرُ وَمَا لَهُم بِذَلِكَ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا يَظُنُّونَ

They say, 'There is nothing but the life of this world: we live and we die, and nothing but time destroys us.' But they do not have any knowledge of that, and they only make conjectures.[1]

Atheists are not carried away to this ridiculous ideology except through reliance upon conjecture which cannot in any form serve as a substitute to truth.

Self-Edification

Self-edification is among the Islamic methods of training that enables a person to dominate evil, which leads to wretchedness and destruction of a person.

The Most High has said:

وَأَمَّا مَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِ وَنَهَى النَّفْسَ عَنِ الْهَوَى فَإِنَّ الْجَنَّةَ هِيَ الْمَأْوَى

But as for him who is awed to stand before his Lord and forbids the soul from [following] desire, his refuge will indeed be paradise.[2]

The Most High has also said:

وَنَفْسٍ وَمَا سَوَّاهَا فَأَلْهَمَهَا فُجُورَهَا وَتَقْوَاهَا قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَن زَكَّاهَا وَقَدْ خَابَ مَن دَسَّاهَا

By the soul and Him who fashioned it, and inspired it with [discernment between] its virtues and vices: one who purifies it is felicitous, and one who betrays it fails.[3]

Verily, in humans there is a gift from the spirit of Allah the

1– *Surah Jāthiyah* 45:24.
2– *Surah Nāzi'āt* 79:40-41.
3– *Surah Shams* 91:7-10.

Most High that pushes them towards good and self-restraint from what is prohibited by Him the Most High. On the other hand, there is strong and severe satanic inclination within them, inclinations that have no bounds or restrictions and push them towards the world of desire that will keep them from the correct way and captive them in a convoluted labyrinth of sinful life.

It is worth mention a part of the speech of an Iranian philosopher addressing a group of scholars: "The distance between me and God the Most High is only two steps, a step upon myself and the other upon Satan." Another philosopher stood up to say: "You have lengthened the path because there is only one step between us and God the Most High and that is upon ourselves, if we are able to dominate it, surely Satan will flee."

Surely, Islam has accurately observed the activities of evil instincts and has consequently restricted its activities and has granted the power of good deeds to the soul, which is the continuous favor Almighty Allah has prepared for the pious.

God the Most High has said:

إِنَّ الْأَبْرَارَ لَفِي نَعِيمٍ عَلَى الْأَرَائِكِ يَنظُرُونَ تَعْرِفُ فِي وُجُوهِهِمْ نَضْرَةَ النَّعِيمِ

Indeed the pious shall be amid bliss, observing, [as they recline] on couches. You will perceive in their faces the freshness of bliss.[1]

He has also said:

وُجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ نَّاعِمَةٌ لِسَعْيِهَا رَاضِيَةٌ فِي جَنَّةٍ عَالِيَةٍ لَّا تَسْمَعُ فِيهَا لَاغِيَةً فِيهَا عَيْنٌ جَارِيَةٌ فِيهَا سُرُرٌ مَّرْفُوعَةٌ وَأَكْوَابٌ مَّوْضُوعَةٌ وَنَمَارِقُ مَصْفُوفَةٌ وَزَرَابِيُّ مَبْثُوثَةٌ

Some faces on that day will be joyous, pleased with their

1– *Surah MuÔaffifin* 83:22-24.

endeavor; in a lofty paradise, wherein they will not hear any vain talk. In it there is a flowing spring and in it there are raised couches, and goblets set, and cushions laid out in an array, and carpets spread out.[1]

Behold the splendid description of the favor in Paradise that will prompt human beings to stand upright and not answer the call of selfishness and self-conceit.

The Most High has also described the eternal favor in paradise thus:

عَلَى سُرُرٍ مَّوْضُونَةٍ مُّتَّكِئِينَ عَلَيْهَا مُتَقَابِلِينَ يَطُوفُ عَلَيْهِمْ وِلْدَانٌ مُّخَلَّدُونَ بِأَكْوَابٍ وَأَبَارِيقَ وَكَأْسٍ مِّن مَّعِينٍ لَا يُصَدَّعُونَ عَنْهَا وَلَا يُنزِفُونَ وَفَاكِهَةٍ مِّمَّا يَتَخَيَّرُونَ وَلَحْمِ طَيْرٍ مِّمَّا يَشْتَهُونَ وَحُورٌ عِينٌ كَأَمْثَالِ اللُّؤْلُؤِ الْمَكْنُونِ جَزَاء بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

On brocaded couches reclining on them, face to face. They will be waited upon by immortal youths, with goblets and ewers and a cup of a clear wine, which neither causes them headache nor stupefaction, and such fruits as they prefer and such flesh of fowls as they desire, and big-eyed houris like guarded pearls, a reward for what they used to do.[2]

The Most High has said:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ كَانَتْ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتُ الْفِرْدَوْسِ نُزُلًا خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا لَا يَبْغُونَ عَنْهَا حِوَلًا

As for those who have faith and do righteous deeds they shall have the gardens of Firdaws for abode, to remain [forever] in them, from where they will not seek to shift.[3]

1– *Surah Ghāshiyah* 88:8-16.
2– *Surah Wāqi'ah* 56:15-24.
3– *Surah Kahf* 18:107-108.

Surely this tremendous reward unshackles the soul from irregularity and perversion and delivers it into a world of light.

Almighty Allah has described the dreadful punishment that will be directed to those who have followed their selfishness and shirk remembrance of Allah the Most High. He has said:

هَذَانِ خَصْمَانِ اخْتَصَمُوا فِي رَبِّهِمْ فَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا قُطِّعَتْ لَهُمْ ثِيَابٌ مِّن نَّارٍ يُصَبُّ مِن فَوْقِ رُؤُوسِهِمُ الْحَمِيمُ يُصْهَرُ بِهِ مَا فِي بُطُونِهِمْ وَالْجُلُودُ وَلَهُم مَّقَامِعُ مِنْ حَدِيدٍ كُلَّمَا أَرَادُوا أَن يَخْرُجُوا مِنْهَا مِنْ غَمٍّ أُعِيدُوا فِيهَا وَذُوقُوا عَذَابَ الْحَرِيقِ

These two contenders contend concerning their Lord. As for those who are faithless, cloaks of fire will be cut out for them, and boiling water will be poured over their heads, with which their skins and entrails will be fused, and there will be clubs of iron for them. Whenever they desire to leave it out of anguish, they will be turned back into it [and told]: 'Taste the punishment of the burning!'[1]

Behold the dreadful recompense for those who have strived to block the remembrance of Allah in selfishness and have also oppressed others?

The Most High has said:

خُذُوهُ فَغُلُّوهُ ثُمَّ الْجَحِيمَ صَلُّوهُ ثُمَّ فِي سِلْسِلَةٍ ذَرْعُهَا سَبْعُونَ ذِرَاعًا فَاسْلُكُوهُ إِنَّهُ كَانَ لَا يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ الْعَظِيمِ وَلَا يَحُضُّ عَلَى طَعَامِ الْمِسْكِينِ فَلَيْسَ لَهُ الْيَوْمَ هَاهُنَا حَمِيمٌ وَلَا طَعَامٌ إِلَّا مِنْ غِسْلِينٍ لَا يَأْكُلُهُ إِلَّا الْخَاطِؤُونَ

[The angels will be told:] 'Seize him, and fetter him! Then put him into hell. Then, in a chain whose length is seventy cubits, bind him. Indeed he had no faith in Allah, the All-supreme, and he did not urge the feeding of the needy, so he has no friend

1– *Surah Ḥajj* 22:19-22.

here today, nor any food except pus, which no one shall eat except the iniquitous."[1]

And the Most High has said:

أَذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ نُّزُلًا أَمْ شَجَرَةُ الزَّقُّومِ إِنَّا جَعَلْنَاهَا فِتْنَةً لِّلظَّالِمِينَ إِنَّهَا شَجَرَةٌ تَخْرُجُ فِي أَصْلِ الْجَحِيمِ طَلْعُهَا كَأَنَّهُ رُؤُوسُ الشَّيَاطِينِ فَإِنَّهُمْ لَآكِلُونَ مِنْهَا فَمَالِؤُونَ مِنْهَا الْبُطُونَ ثُمَّ إِنَّ لَهُمْ عَلَيْهَا لَشَوْبًا مِّنْ حَمِيمٍ ثُمَّ إِنَّ مَرْجِعَهُمْ لَإِلَى الْجَحِيمِ

Is this a better hospitality, or the Zaqqūm tree? Indeed We have made it a punishment for the wrongdoers. Indeed it is a tree that emerges from the depths of hell. Its spathes are as if they were devils' heads. Indeed they will eat from it and gorge with it their bellies. Indeed, on top of that they will take a solution of scalding water. Then indeed their retreat will be toward hell.[2]

Verily, this reward which Allah the Most High has prepared for the oppressors fills the soul with terror and naturally that will serve as a barrier against offending Almighty Allah and may also keep the soul from committing sins.

Definitely nothing can control the soul or dominate it apart from fear that takes leadership of the soul and keeps its deviations in check.

Development of Volition

What is greatly important in Islamic training is striving to develop volition and strengthen it in the soul of a Muslim. It is emphasized that the power of volition has active influence in building a strong personality that is not perverted with misguided acts and does not split before the storm of occurrences and seditions.

Verily, Islam has granted people the power of determination and volition and makes them safe from weakness and terror

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1– *Surah Hāqqah* 69:30-37.
2– *Surah Ñāffāt* 37:62-68.

through supplication.

Surely the great Messenger (ṣ) is an exalted exemplar of the power of determination and volition. He has stood firmly and singly before the actions of the ignorant under an ignorant leader in the person of Abi Sufyan, the father of Muʿāwiyah and grandfather of Yazīd. He disregarded the hardships while he continued his struggle alongside his uncle, the Defender of Islam, the Believer among the Quraysh, and the Hero of the Islamic Call, Abu Óālib as well as his son, the great and exalted leader of Islam, the Commander of the Faithful, Imam ʿAlī ibn Abī Óālib (ʿa). On this path, Abū Óālib suffered great adversity. He was surrounded by Quraysh leaders on all sides, threatening him to make his nephew put an end to his religious invitation. He presented their request to the holy Prophet (ṣ) to which he replied to them with the following statement which is a guiding light for reformers:

> O uncle of mine! By Allah, if the sun was put in my right hand and the moon in my left so that I denounce this great message, I shall never denounce it until I die on this path or Almighty Allah brings about victory.

With this strong determination, he overcame all obstacles; he brought an end to the Age of Ignorance; he broke its idols and raised the banner of Allah the Most High on the earth; he built a new life for humanity based on awareness and firmness on the path of truth.

The holy Prophet (ṣ) transferred this volition over to his companions and they became like a mountain. Regardless their few numbers, they defeated the power of polytheism and established the great Islamic government that upheld the rights of the oppressed and the persecuted on the earth. This Prophetic volition emerged in the Imam, the Commander of the Faithful (ʿa), who dispatched belligerent polytheists with his sword. He abased the powers hostile to Islam such as the Jews. The Commander of the Faithful (ʿa) in this respect has said:

> If the entirety of Arabs waged war against me, I would never run away from them.

Verily, this strong determination is a gift from the spirit of Almighty Allah that manifested perfectly in the grandson of the Messenger of Allah (ṣ), the Pioneer of the Free, Imam Ḥusayn (ʿa). He stood firmly on the soil of Karbala displaying splendid heroism, the heroism of his father and grandfather. He addressed those that had deviated from the path as well as the polytheists thus:

> Verily, I do not see death except as felicity, and living with oppressors as adversity.

He walked into the field with prestige along with the prominent ones among his household and companions. They confronted and combated the soldiers of the infidels with courage until they were all martyred. Indeed the world has not witnessed its like in any war.

Zainab al-Kubrā' the granddaughter of the Messenger of Allah (ṣ) also armed herself with patience and determination. Her like has not been seen in this world in terms of heroism and resolve. Verily, she addressed Yazīd in the heart of his power thus:

> Verily, I deem your power to be very minor and your reproach very great and I shall admonish you in abundance.

Behold the abasement and degradation of this tyrant who diminished all human fundamentals. Zaynab was the granddaughter of the holy Messenger (ṣ) who changed the course of history with her eloquent sermon in the heart of the Umayyad's power for the crowd of people in Kufa. Surely she clothed the Umayyads in distress and disgrace and removed them from the compass of Islam.

In any case, the value of humans is the power of their volition and firmness of determination. A human is nothing if severed from determination.

According to René Descartes, there is nothing in humans more closely related to their personality than volition. In fact, the power of volition has complete influence on the composition of a person and their immortality. It is not possible for persons with weak determinations to achieve anything for themselves or for their societies.

To Arm Oneself with Patience

Arming oneself with patience is an aspect of Islamic training. This method calls for a balanced and unwavering personality which shall not collapse before the tribulations and misfortunes of life. Verily Islam encourages us to endow ourselves with patience. There is much emphasis in the Qur'ān and the Tradition of the holy Prophet (ṣ) in this respect.

Patience according to the Holy Qur'ān

Many verses have been revealed in the holy Qur'ān that encourage patience including the following:

1. The Most High has said:

إِنَّمَا يُوَفَّى الصَّابِرُونَ أَجْرَهُم بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ

Indeed the patient will be paid in full their reward without any reckoning.[1]

The verse states that Almighty Allah shall grant a great reward without any reckoning for those who have patience.

2. The Most High has also said:

وَاللّهُ يُحِبُّ الصَّابِرِينَ

And Allah loves the steadfast.[2]

What benefit can humans achieve that is greater than to be loved by Almighty Allah. Whoever is loved by Almighty Allah

1– *Surah Zumar* 39:10.
2– *Surah Àl 'Imrān* 3:146.

enters into Paradise and all their sins shall be forgiven.

3. The Most High has also said:

وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّ الَّذِينَ صَبَرُواْ أَجْرَهُم بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُواْ يَعْمَلُونَ

And We will surely pay the patient their reward by the best of what they used to do.[1]

Verily Almighty Allah grants the steadfast a reward greater than their good acts in the world.

4. Almighty Allah has said:

وَجَعَلْنَا مِنْهُمْ أَئِمَّةً يَهْدُونَ بِأَمْرِنَا لَمَّا صَبَرُوا وَكَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا يُوقِنُونَ

And amongst them We appointed imams to guide [the people] by Our command, when they had been patient and had conviction in Our signs.[2]

Verily, patience is a gift among the gifts of Almighty Allah that a believer clings to in order to protect oneself from deceit and difficulties. If not due to patience persons would lose their power and will become weak in the struggles of this life.

Due to the great importance of steadfastness, the holy Qur'ān has mentioned it in seventy verses. It has not mentioned any other virtue to such great extent.

Patience according to Traditions

The holy Imams have encouraged us to hold fast to patience. Many Narrations exist in this respect, including:

1. Imam Abu Jaʿfar, Bāqir (ʿa), has said:

> [The road to] Paradise is fraught with difficulties set by Allah and [the necessity for] patience; whoever has patience in the difficulties in this world shall enter

1– *Surah Naḥl* 16:96.
2– *Surah Sajdah* 32:24.

Paradise. [On the other hand, the road to] Hell is full of pleasures and desires, whoever gives in to its pleasures and desires shall enter the hellfire.[1]

2. Imam Abu Abdullāh, Ṣādiq (ʿa), has said:

Patience to faith is like the head to the body. If there is no head the body is lost likewise faith is lost if patience is absent.[2]

3. Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) has said:

When my father was close to death, he held me close to his chest and said: O son of mine! Be patient upon the path of truth even if it is bitter, since you will be rewarded without any reckoning.[3]

4- Imam ʿAlī, the Commander of the Faithful (ʿa), has said:

Whoever is not rescued through patience shall be destroyed through impatience.[4]

There are many such Narrations from the Household of the holy Prophet (ʿa) which encourage Muslims to have patience because it is tranquility for souls that are facing the tribulations and misfortunes of life. In other words, patience is a balm for hardships.

Types of Patience

Patience is of different types as mentioned by ethicists, including:

1. Patience in times of calamity: Truly, the holy Qur'ān has encouraged us to have patience.

The Most High has said:

1– *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 2, p. 89.
2– *Ibid*, p. 87.
3– *Al-Wāfi*, vol 3, p. 65; also *Wasā'il ash-Shī'ah*, vol. 15, p. 237.
4– *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 18, p. 415.

وَبَشِّرِ الصَّابِرِينَ الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُم مُّصِيبَةٌ قَالُواْ إِنَّا لِلّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعونَ أُولَئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَاتٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُهْتَدُونَ

And give good news to the patient –those who, when an affliction visits them, say, 'Indeed we belong to Allah, and to Him do we indeed return.' It is they who receive the blessings of their Lord and [His] mercy, and it is they who are the [rightly] guided.[1]

2. Patience in obedience to Almighty Allah: This is the best type of patience among all other types.

Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) has said:

> Be steadfast in obedience to Allah and also be patient against His disobedience because this world is just one moment. You feel no pleasure or pain from past moments and you know nothing of future moments. So be steadfast in that one moment.[2]

Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) has said:

> When the day of resurrection comes, some people shall rise up and come to the door of Paradise knocking at it. "Who are you?" It will be inquired of them. They will answer: "We are the patient." They will be asked: "Upon what were you patient?" They will reply: "We were patient in obedience to Almighty Allah and steadfast against offence to Almighty Allah. Allah the Most High will say: "They have said the truth, let them enter Paradise", and this is the declaration of Almighty Allah:

قُلْ يَا عِبَادِ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمْ لِلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا فِي هَذِهِ الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةٌ وَأَرْضُ اللَّهِ وَاسِعَةٌ إِنَّمَا يُوَفَّى الصَّابِرُونَ أَجْرَهُم بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ

1– *Surah Baqarah* 2:155-157.
2– *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 2, p. 459.

Indeed the patient will be paid in full their reward without any reckoning.[1]

3. Patience in times of fear such as on the battlefield and in defense of life, honor, and wealth.

These were several types of patience and steadfastness. More types may be found in books of ethics.

Verily, Islam considers patience and steadfastness in their broad sense to be the most clear of virtues and most beneficial for human beings. It has been said that the most prestigious and elevated of nations as well as the most prestigious in authority is the nation that knows steadfastness, firmly holds to it in dangerous situations, and is resistant before storms of adversity.

To surrender before adversity and not defending against it with legitimate means is not regarded as steadfastness. Likewise to resort to resting while expecting your provisions to come by themselves is also not regarded as steadfastness because it negates the commandment of Islam that orders us to strive on the earth seeking provision.

Almighty Allah has said:

فَامْشُوا فِي مَنَاكِبِهَا وَكُلُوا مِن رِّزْقِهِ

So walk on its flanks and eat of His provision.[2]

Thus, it is incumbent upon us to strive to obtain our livelihood. Idleness is not permissible in any situation. It is a manifestation of ignorance and thoughtlessness and a doorway to atrocities and depravity.[3]

Bravery

Bravery is an important component of the human personality. It

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1– *Ibid*, p. 75; and– *Surah Zumar* 39:10.
2– *Surah Mulk* 67:15.
3– *An-Nizām at-Tarbawī fī al-Islām*, p. 237.

makes a person steadfast when the world is filled with grievous occurrences, misfortune, and catastrophes.

Islam lays importance on instilling this outstanding characteristic in the minds of Muslims and emphasizes its observance in every field of training. Various personages of Islam have braved the fields of sacrifice and competed with each other to embrace swords and arrows. Though they were few in number, they were able to defeat the great power of polytheism and atheism and establish the Islamic nation. The foremost of these unique people is the Commander of the Faithful (ʿa). He was the bravest and most steadfast of people and the most connected with the soul. He showed exceptional bravery especially during the battles of Badr, Ahzāb, Uḥud, Khaybar, and others. He never fell back from this position; rather, he strove forward in the cause of Almighty Allah while saying:

> Numerous people revolving round me did not increase my prestige, likewise their separation from me did not make me fear and if all people surrender me, it will not make me to bow down.

Verily, his heroism was known by all people of the world and all historians have agreed that he has shown the most magnificent form of bravery and heroism in the world.

His son, Imam al-Ḥusain (ʿa), exalted in this field after him. He was the pioneer of the free and the leader of movement for freedom in Islam. He definitely shone like his father and after his father no one in the world is like him in heroism. Verily he received arrows and sword wounds in the land of Karbala with a smiling face without fear of the martyrdom of his companions and his household. Indeed, the oppressed stood firm like a mountain. He taught the most splendid lesson in honor, magnanimity, and selflessness to the entire world. He addressed the infidel soldiers from Umayyad thus:

> By Allah I will not give you my allegiance as it is a

> grace and I will never submit to you like a slave. Verily, I do not see death except as felicity, and living with oppressors as adversity.

Indeed, the polytheists feared him even after he fell to the ground of the holy land of Karbala.

Sayyid Haydar has said:

> No war has seen such a victim who even the heroes of battle feared.

He remained firm and did not become incapacitated before tribulations that even bring tremors to mountains. Verily his great heroism brought about a tremendous victory for Islam. It is a shining light in the firmament showing the way of struggle to youths so they may gain their freedom and independence.

Literary Bravery

What we mean by that is to speak the truth loudly, with courage and selflessness. This is what Islam wants from Muslims, i.e. speaking the truth without diffidence, fear, or apprehension. It has been reported in a Narration that:

> Speak the truth even if it is bitter.

And in another Narration it is said:

> Do not fear the censure of the censurer when you speak.

In a Narration from the Commander of the Faithful to his son Imam al-Ḥasan (ʿa) it is said:

> On the path of truth, plunge into the heart of hardships in all conditions.

And in his counsel to the commanders of his army he said:

> Plunge into the heart of truth.

The holy Prophet (ṣ) has said:

> If you see my nation fearing an oppressor, tell them

they are oppressors because they have reconciled with the situation.

Among the Companions, one who possessed literal bravery is the great companion Abūdhar al-Ghifārī. He was overcome with his Islamic ideology which made him speak the truth manifestly in the most violent political atmosphere. He resisted the Umayyad government under the leadership of Uthmān ibn ʿAffān who made the Muslim countries into gardens for the Umayyad and the workers and agents of his government. In this respect, Abūdhar shouted out before him and demanded that he implement justice in his politics but Uthmān did not listen.

The outcry of Abūdhar is the cry of an aware Muslim who knew Islam. He stood by his aims and denied Uthmān and his politics that considered usage of the nation's treasure and plundering of its wealth a game. He granted it to famous people at a time when starvation had permeated the whole country.

Sayyid Quṭb has said: "Verily the outcry of Abūdhar is a cry with the support of the Islamic spirit. It was denied by those whose minds were corrupt. Even today their kind does stop denying it. This outcry rises from an alert mind that has not been deadened by greed. Truly, excess amassing of wealth causes separation among the Islamic community and destroys the fundamentals that the Islamic religion seeks to establish."[1]

Indeed Abūdhar struggled with courage and braveness to denounce the politics of the Umayyad leaders. He manifested his anger over their behavior which was contrary to the Book of Almighty Allah and the Tradition of His holy Prophet (ṣ). Consequently, Uthmān exiled him to a barren land where he died in hunger while Uthmān was in possession of much gold that he spent generously on the Umayyads and the family of Abī Muʿīṭ and kept it from this great Companion of the holy Prophet (ṣ) who dedicated his entire life to Almighty Allah just

1– *Al-Adālat al-Ijtimāʿiyah*, p. 211.

as the holy Prophet (ṣ) has said in his respect:

> He is similar to Jesus Christ son of Mary in his guidance and in his methods.

In any case, literary bravery and condemnation of the dark politics that oppose truth and reality is a clear characteristic of Shīʿah leaders. They condemned the Umayyad politics with utmost bravery. A Shīʿah leader, Hijr ibn ʿUdayy, called out the cry of revenge against the Umayyads and their agents and announced words of truth. He was arrested and executed by the infidel Muʿāwiyah ibn Hind. ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAfīf al-Azarī, a companion of the Commander of the Faithful, demanded vengeance of the infidel and criminal, ʿUbaydullāh ibn Ziyād, while he was making an address at the court of Kufa after killing the Master of the Youths of Paradise, Imam al-Ḥusain (ʿa). ʿUbaydullāh opened his address as follows:

"Thanks be to Almighty Allah who manifested truth and the people of truth and gave victory to the Commander of the Faithful and his partisans and killed, the liar the son of a liar, Imam Ḥusayn (ʿa)!"

Before he could say anything else ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAfīf replied with a statement like a thunderbolt upon the head of the infidel. In a loud voice he said:

> "Verily it is you, your father, your employer, and his father (i.e. Yazid) that are liars son of liars. O ʿAbd Banī ʿAlāj, O enemy of Allah, do you talk in this form on the pulpit of the Muslims after killing the descendants of the holy Prophet...
> Oh woe! Where are the children of the Immigrants and the Helpers (Muhājirīn and Anṣār) to take revenge from you and your infidelity, the cursed and the son of the cursed one (referring to Yazīd and his father Muʿāwiyah) in emulation of the Prophet?"

ʿAqīlah of Banī Hāshim, the granddaughter of the holy Messenger (ṣ), addressed the filthy sinful terrorist Ibn Marjānah thus when he manifested his happiness over the martyrdom of

Imam al-Ḥusain (ʿa):

> (Pointing at Imam al-Ḥusain (ʿa) and the stars among his household and his companions) Allah has ordained death upon these people so they came to be in their resting place. Definitely Allah soon shall join you and them in the same place. Your dispute will be taken before God. Then see who will be vanquished on that day. O son of Marjānah, may your mother be bereft of you.

Thus, these words were like a thunderbolt on the head of these despicable criminals in the palace of the infidels where the son of Marjānah was displaying his arrogance and announcing his happiness over the annihilation of the progeny of Allah's Messenger (ṣ). Even though she was a captive, she stood up with all the daring in her historically eternal sermon saying:

> Verily, I deem your power to be very minor and your reproach very great and I shall admonish you in abundance.

She added:

> Continue your deception and make every effort. However, by Allah our remembrance shall not be lost, our lesson will not die, and you will not perceive time and its disgrace will not be rinsed from you.
> Is your flag not refuted? Your days are numbered and your fellows will be dispersed. That is day when a caller shall cry: Surely the curse of Allah shall be upon the oppressors.

Verily the granddaughter of the holy Prophet brought down and annulled the struggles of the infidel from his throne to his grave and he was not able to say even a word. She inherited this bravery from her father and grandfather who are the source of heroism on earth.

Kumait, a great and inspired poet, appeared in the scene of heroes. He confronted the Umayyads with harsh language and

commended the virtues of ʿAli's family thus:

> Imam is who governs people not like the shepherd;
> under him people are equal even the shepherd;
> the slave is not like the master or the son,
> or was Sulaymān after then like Hishām.

Hisham satirized the infidel saying:

> He acts according to his statements when he is on the pulpit, but he does wrong when he comes down.
> The statements of the holy Prophets of guidance are upon our tongues, but we still commit the actions of the Age of Ignorance.

He addressed the Umayyads with the following poem:

> Tell the Umayyads any where they are, even though you fear the sword and estrangement, may Allah put in hunger whom they have satisfied and may He satisfy whom your atrocities have put in hunger.

The Umayyads continued their persecution and pressure but it increased his firmness in his ideology and faith in his fundamentals.

Another poet known as Farazdaq appeared in the heroism scene. He was outspoken in criticizing the Umayyads. Truly, the household of the holy Prophet (ṣ), the callers for truth and justice in the Islamic world became victorious. An important poem of his was the laudation of Imam Zayn al-Ābidīn (ʿa) and criticism of Hishām ibn ʿAbdul Malik who repudiated the holy Imam before the people of Shām:

> This is a person whom the plains know his footsteps,
> likewise the house of God (Kaʿbah) and other sacred places know him.
> This is the son of the best of all creations,
> this is the God-fearing, the pure and the purified.
> Your denouncement of him cannot harm him,

because Arabs and non-Arabs know whom you deny.

He was inflicted with the wrath and indignation of the Umayyads but he did not pay attention to that and with courage he continued his satirizations:

He presents himself as if he is an honorable person but he is not
Through the defect in his eye, his blames became obvious

Diʿbil Khuzāʿī was another poet-defender of the oppressed and persecuted. He spoke the truth outwardly and harbored malice against the Abbasid kings who oppressed and exhausted the nation. He satirized Rashīd, Amīn, Maʾmūn, Muʿtaṣim, and Ibrahim ibn Mahdī. The best and the most firm of his satires in truth is what he has said concerning Muʿtaṣim:

A leader rose who was unguided himself
Lacking religion and intellect
The Abbasid kings are written seven in number,
No writings have come to us on an eighth
Like the Seven Sleepers who number seven
They are the best even though their dog is counted as their eighth
I elevate their dog over you because you are a sinner, the dog sinless

Indeed this great man has been influenced by his religion and ideology to uphold the truth and oppose tyranny. Thus, he satirized the oppressors among the Abbasid leaders who subdued the nation and forcibly appropriated its wealth. No one was able to speak out the truth and defend the interests of the weak and poor except the Shīʿah leaders from the household of the holy Prophet (ʿa).

Forbearance

Forbearance and suppressing anger are among the exalted attributes the importance of which has been emphasized in Islam. Verily the holy Qur'ān and the Traditions of the holy

Prophet have expressed this unique virtue.

Forbearance according to the Holy Qur'ān

Forbearance has been extolled in various verses of the holy Qur'ān, such as the following:

1. Almighty Allah has said:

وَلَا تَسْتَوِي الْحَسَنَةُ وَلَا السَّيِّئَةُ ادْفَعْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ فَإِذَا الَّذِي بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَهُ عَدَاوَةٌ كَأَنَّهُ وَلِيٌّ حَمِيمٌ وَمَا يُلَقَّاهَا إِلَّا الَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا وَمَا يُلَقَّاهَا إِلَّا ذُو حَظٍّ عَظِيمٍ

Good and evil [conduct] are not equal. Repel [evil] with what is best. [If you do so,] behold, he between whom and you was enmity, will be as though he were a sympathetic friend. But none is granted it except those who are patient, and none is granted it except the greatly endowed.[1]

Only one with forbearance repels evil with what is best and this characteristic is the most manifest attribute of such persons. The result of this exalted virtue is that enemies who persist in their enmity will become sympathetic friends. The rightly guided Imams (ʿa) behaved in this manner. They have forgave those who persecuted them and showered good and courtesy upon them until their enemies became their sincere friends.

2. Almighty Allah has said:

وَإِذَا خَاطَبَهُمُ الْجَاهِلُونَ قَالُوا سَلَامًا

...and when the ignorant address them, they say, 'Peace!'[2]

Among the attributes of patient persons is that whenever they unexpectedly meet with ignorant people they receive them with greeting and peace in order to avoid their evil.

3. The Most High has said:

1– *Surah FuÒÒilat* 41:34-35.
2– *Surah Furqān* 25:63.

وَالْكَاظِمِينَ الْغَيْظَ وَالْعَافِينَ عَنِ النَّاسِ وَاللّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

Those who…suppress their anger, and excuse [the faults of] the people, and Allah loves the virtuous.[1]

Among the attributes of the patient, which Almighty Allah loves, is suppression of anger and pardon of those who commit blunders against them.

4. Concerning the attributes of the father of the holy Prophets, Ibrāhīm (ʿa) Almighty Allah has said:

إِنَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ لَحَلِيمٌ أَوَّاهٌ مُّنِيبٌ

Abraham was indeed most forbearing, plaintive, [and] penitent.[2]

5. Almighty Allah has said to His Messenger Muḥammad (ṣ):

خُذِ الْعَفْوَ وَأْمُرْ بِالْعُرْفِ وَأَعْرِضْ عَنِ الْجَاهِلِينَ

Adopt [a policy of] excusing [the faults of people], bid what is right, and turn away from the ignorant.[3]

Indeed forbearance is one of the obvious attributes of a person and a proof of open-mindedness and an exalted determination.

Forbearance according to the Traditions of the Holy Prophet (ṣ)

There are abundant Narrations from the holy Prophet (ṣ) and from the rightly guided Imams (ʿa) that glorify forbearance and praise those that are attributed with it. The following are several such Narrations:

1. The holy Prophet (ṣ) has said:

O Allah bestow upon me knowledge and adorn me

1– *Surah Àl 'Imrān* 3:134.
2– *Surah Hūd* 11:75.
3– *Surah A'rāf* 7:199.

with forbearance.[1]

2. The Messenger of Allah (ṣ) has said:

> Almighty Allah never elevated one with ignorance and He never reduced the patient.[2]

3. The Commander of the Faithful, Imam ʿAlī (ʿa), has said:

> There is no good in increasing your wealth and children; rather, betterment is in increasing your knowledge and forbearance.[3]

4. Imam ʿAlī, the Commander of the Faithful (ʿa), heard a man insulting Qanbar. Before Qanbar could retort Imam said to him:

> O Qanbar! Leave alone he who has insulted you. This pleases the Most Merciful and angers Satan and serves as punishment to your enemy. By He who sprouts the seed and causes the wind, a believer cannot please his Lord more with anything but forbearance. Nothing angers Satan like silence and nothing punishes an ignorant person like silence.[4]

5. Imam ʿAlī, the Commander of the Faithful (ʿa), has said:

> The first reward of a tolerant person for tolerance is assistance by the people against the ignorant.[5]

6. Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) has said:

> Patience is assistance enough for a person.[6]

7. Imam Zayn al-Ābidīn (ʿa) has said:

> Verily, it astonishes me for a person to be forbearing

1– *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 97, p. 368.
2– *UÒūl al-Kāfī,* vol. 2, p. 120.
3– *Niẓām at-Tarbawī fī al-Islām*, p. 238.
4– Mufīd, *Al-Amāli*, p. 118.
5– *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 19, p. 26.
6– *UÒūl al-Kāfī,* vol. 2, p. 120.

> when in a state of anger.[1]

This noble characteristic is one of the attributes of Imams (ʿa) of the Household of the holy Prophet (ṣ). Thus, Imam Ḥasan (ʿa), the grandson of the Messenger of Allah (ṣ), his Fragrant Flower, and the Leader of the Youth in Paradise, is an exemplar of patience such that even Marwā ibn Ḥakam bore witness to this. When he was carrying his corpse, Imam Ḥusayn overpowered him and said to him:

"Do you carry his corpse today while before you have made him swallow his anger by the mouthful?"

Marwan said: "Truly, I behaved thus with a man who was patient like a mountain."[2]

Imam Mūsā ibn Jaʿfar (ʿa) is more than anyone in forbearing and open-mindedness. This is why he was named *Kāẓim*, meaning the suppresser of anger. He advised his children with this valuable testament:

> O my children, I bequeath you with a piece of advice, whoever puts it into effect shall not go wrong. If someone says something wrong in your right ear but makes an apology in your left ear that they did not say anything, accept their apology.[3]

Historians have recounted the forbearance of Imam Musa al-Kazim (ʿa) thus. A man from the progeny of ʿUmar ibn Khaṭṭāb vexed the Imam and insulted his forefathers. Some of the companions of the Imam sought permission to kill the wicked but the holy Imam prevented them. The Imam inquired of his place of work and was told that his farm was situated in the outskirts of Medina. He mounted his horse and proceeded towards his farm and met him there. The man shouted at the Imam: "Don't lay foot on our farm." But the Imam went to him

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1– *Ibid*, vol. 2, p. 120.
2– *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 4, p. 5.
3– *Kashf al-Ghummah*, vol. 2, p. 218.

with great respect and said to him: "How much did you spend on your farm and how much do you expect to gain?" The man replied: "I spent one hundred Dinars and since I do not have hidden knowledge I do not know how much I will gain." "What do you expect as a gain from your farm", the Imam said. The man replied: "I expect two hundred Dinars." Imam (ʿa) brought out and gave him a packet containing three hundred Dinars and said to him: "The farm is still yours and may Allah provide you with what you expected from it." The man stood up and kissed the Imam's head and requested that he pardon him. The Imam smiled and departed. He returned to the mosque where he met the man. The man stood up and said: "Allah knows where to assign His message and He gives it to whom He wishes."

The Imam allowed him to sit and informed the audience what he did which in return changed the man's attitude. The holy Imam added:

"Which is better, what you intended to do or what I did? Verily, as you know, I have reformed his behavior and was exempted from his evil."[1]

Definitely,forbearance eradicates a lot of problems and puts an end to discord. It necessitates love and cordiality within people and that is why Islam has given much consideration to it and enjoins Muslims to adorn themselves with it.

Kindness

Kindness to people is one of the methods of training which Islam adopts because it brings about cordiality and love within people. Truly the heart is inclined towards whoever is kind to it. Some verses of the holy Qur'ān invite us to this characteristic, including:

1. Almighty Allah has said:

1– *Tarīkh Baghdād*, vol. 13, pp. 28-29.

وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ دِينًا مِّمَّنْ أَسْلَمَ وَجْهَهُ لله وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ

And who has a better religion than him who submits his will to Allah, being virtuous.[1]

2. The Most High has said:

مَن جَاء بِالْحَسَنَةِ فَلَهُ عَشْرُ أَمْثَالِهَا

Whoever brings virtue shall receive ten times its like.[2]

3. Almighty Allah has said:

إِنَّ اللّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاء ذِي الْقُرْبَى وَيَنْهَى عَنِ الْفَحْشَاء وَالْمُنكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ

Indeed Allah enjoins justice and kindness and generosity towards relatives, and He forbids indecency, wrong, and aggression.[3]

4. The Most High has said:

وَمَن يُسْلِمْ وَجْهَهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ فَقَدِ اسْتَمْسَكَ بِالْعُرْوَةِ الْوُثْقَى

Whoever surrenders his heart to Allah and is virtuous has certainly held fast to the firmest handle.[4]

5. The Most High has said:

مَن جَاء بِالْحَسَنَةِ فَلَهُ خَيْرٌ مِّنْهَا وَهُم مِّن فَزَعٍ يَوْمَئِذٍ آمِنُونَ

Whoever brings virtue shall receive [a reward] better than it; and they shall be secure from terror on that day.[5]

1– *Surah Nisā'* 4:125.
2– *Surah An'ām* 6:160.
3– *Surah Nahl* 16:90.
4– *Surah Luqmān* 31:22.
5– *Surah Naml* 27:89.

Definitely in Islam kindness to people is among the best means of spreading love and cordiality among people. Indeed, it is a most important focus in building the Islamic society.

Forgiveness

Among the attributes Islam has enjoined is pardoning aggressors and forgiving faults. Verily, the holy Qur'ān encourages us adorn ourselves with this exalted attribute. The Most High has said:

وَإِن تَعْفُوا وَتَصْفَحُوا وَتَغْفِرُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ

And if you excuse, forbear and forgive, then Allah is indeed all-forgiving, all-merciful.[1]

Also, Almighty Allah has said:

وَلَا تَسْتَوِي الْحَسَنَةُ وَلَا السَّيِّئَةُ ادْفَعْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ فَإِذَا الَّذِي بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَهُ عَدَاوَةٌ كَأَنَّهُ وَلِيٌّ حَمِيمٌ

Good and evil [conduct] are not equal. Repel [evil] with what is best. [If you do so,] behold, he between whom and you was enmity, will be as though he were a sympathetic friend.[2]

As for books of Narration, they indeed contain a lot of Narrations reported from the holy Prophet (ṣ). Many Narrations encourage Muslims to pardon whoever offends them. In this respect,it was reported from the holy Prophet that:

> Shall I inform you of the best morals of this world and the hereafter? To pardon who has oppressed you, reconcile with who has broken relationship with you, and be kind to who offended you, and grant to who has deprived you.[3]

1– *Surah Taghābun* 64:14.
2– *Surah FuÒÒilat* 41:34.
3– *UÒūl al-Kāfī,* vol. 2, p. 107.

He has also said:

> I enjoin you to be forgiving because forgiveness increases your greatness, so grant forgiveness so that you earn Allah's laudation.[1]

This noble practice is among the attributes of the holy Prophet (ṣ). He would encounter those that offended him with pardon and kindness. He pardoned the polytheists of Quraysh who harassed and mocked him, ousted him from his house, lead soldiers to wage war against him, and inflicted severe punishment against whoever had faith in his Message. They did not leave them alone and afflicted them with all sorts of punishment. However, when Almighty Allah gave a great and tremendous victory to him wherein he occupied the city of Mecca, the Prophet (ṣ) addressed them thus: "What do you think I will do to you?" They all said: "You are a merciful person and the son of a merciful person." He then pronounced general amnesty and pardon saying: "I pardon you and you are all free."

Among his exalted kindnesses is what was reported by Anas ibn Mālik. He said: "I was with the holy Prophet (ṣ) while he was wearing a thick garment. It strongly attracted a Bedouin until he made a sign on his neck and said to him in anger and annoyance:

"O Muḥammad, pack my camels with these things which are part of Allah's wealth with you because you will not give to me from your own wealth or from your father's wealth."

The holy Prophet (ṣ) answered thus: "Definitely the wealth is Allah's and I am his servant."

Then he addressed the Bedouin. "Will you not be recompensed, O Bedouin, for what you have done?" the holy Prophet (ṣ) asked referring to the man's aggression towards him. The

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1– *Ibid*, p. 108.

Bedouin replied in the negative. "Why?" the holy Prophet asked. The Bedouin replied: "Because you do not answer evil with evil."

The holy Prophet (ṣ) smiled and ordered one camel of the Bedouin to be packed with wheat and one with dates.[1]

The same applies to his successors, the Imams from the Household of the holy Prophet (ṣ).

Indeed, historians have reported from Imam Zayn al-Ābidīn (ʿa), the Leader of Worshipers (ʿa), that a man met him with insult and blasphemes and those surrounding him wanted revenge but he prevented them and said to the man: "O man, I am more than what you have said and what you do not know concerning me is more than what you know about me." The man became ashamed of the Imam. Then the Imam stood up and gave his shirt to him as a gift and ordered one thousand Dirhams to be given to him. The man said: "I bear witness that this man is from the progeny of Allah's Messenger (ṣ)."[2]

Similar to this is a person from Damascus who came across Imam Zakī Ḥasan (ʿa). He started insulting him but the holy Imam received him with a bountiful smile and said to him: "O old man, I understand that you are a stranger. If you have a request from us we will surely grant your request. If you seek guidance from us we will definitely guide you. If you wanted us to carry you we will surely carry you along. If you are in hunger we will surely feed you. If you are in need we will surely free you of need. And if you are been cast out we will surely provide you shelter."

The holy Imam (ʿa) did not cease his kind words until the evil mood was lifted from the soul of the man and he was not able to say more except to seek pardon from the Imam: "Almighty

1– *Niẓām at-Tarbawī fī al-Islām*, p. 243.
2– *Hayāt al-Imām Zayn al-Àbidīn (ʿa)*, vol. 1, p. 76.

Allah knows where to bestow His Message and to whom."[1]

The same applies to the other guided Imams and the guiding lights of Islam. If we take a look at their histories we will find them full of such exalted morals. Surely they desisted from all forms of retaliation toward anyone that afflicted them and kept the following saying of the Most High in their minds:

وَيَدْرَؤُونَ بِالْحَسَنَةِ السَّيِّئَةَ

And repel evil [conduct] with good.[2]

Generosity

There is no attribute that elevates human beings and makes the society felicitous except that it is part of Islamic training. Among these exalted attributes is generosity which stems from the nobility and soundness of the soul and keeps one from being afflicted by the disease of stinginess. Verily the holy Prophet (ṣ) has called upon his nation to adorn themselves with generosity and below are several of his Narrations and those of his holy Household (ʿa) in this respect:

1. The Messenger of Allah (ṣ) has said:

   An openhanded person gives out due to his good belief in God.[3]

2. Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) has said:

   Be generous to who deserves it and to who does not deserve it, so that you deserve generosity even if the person does not.[4]

3. The Messenger of Allah (ṣ) has said:

   A munificent person is closer to God, closer to the

1– *Hayāt Imām al-Íasan (ʿa)*, vol. 1, p. 293.
2– *Surah Raʿd* 13:22.
3– *Kanz al-ʿUmmāl*, vol. 6, p. 392.
4– *Furūʿ al-Kāfī*, vol. 4, p. 27.

> people, closer to Paradise, and distant from the hellfire whereas a miser is far from Allah, far from the people, far from Paradise, and closer to the hellfire. Almighty Allah loves an ignorant person that is openhanded more than a worshiper that is stingy.[1]

4. Imam Mūsā ibn Jaʿfar (ʿa) has said:

> Generosity is a virtue and it is close to Allah. He will not abandon generous persons to their own means until they enter Paradise. Verily Allah has not sent any prophet or guardian *(waṣīī)* except that he was an openhanded person and my father did not stop advising me to be generous until the end of his life.[2]

Generosity is a noble characteristic if its aim is to assist the wretched and poor and erase the spirit of wretchedness from them. In this case, it is considered as performed for the cause of Allah the Most High and seeking His pleasure which is the most elevated level of generosity.

Indeed, this noble tendency is the most obvious attribute of the guided Imams (ʿa). For instance, Imam Ḥasan (ʿa) never rejected a requester. He has said:

> I am a requester of Allah and am eager for Him, and I would be ashamed to be a requester myself and to reject a requester. Verily Allah has promised to bestow His favor upon me and I promise Him to bestow His favor upon people. I fear that if I abandon this disposition He will also abandon His disposition.

He has also stated the following:

> A requester who comes to me is welcome to He whose favor is urgent and compulsory upon me, and to He whose favor is a favor to everyone that bestows favor. Verily, the best days of a youth are when the youth is

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1– *Irshād al-Qulūb*, vol. 1, p. 136.
2– *Furūʿ al-Kāfī*, vol. 4, p. 39.

asked [for help].[1]

Kumayt has said the following regarding the generosity of the Household of the holy Prophet (ṣ):

> If a generous man becomes unfruitful for people, where will the abode for the orphans be?

Indeed, their history is full of generosity and openhandedness to the poor which is indicative of their nature.

Self-sacrifice and Unselfishness

Selflessness is among the noble attributes which Islam has adopted as a method of Islamic training and a feature of life for the Muslim society. Indeed, many verses in the holy Qur'ān have praised unique and noble Muslims because they preferred their Muslim brothers over themselves.

The Most High has said:

وَيُؤْثِرُونَ عَلَى أَنفُسِهِمْ وَلَوْ كَانَ بِهِمْ خَصَاصَةٌ وَمَن يُوقَ شُحَّ نَفْسِهِ فَأُوْلَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ

...but prefer [the Immigrants] to themselves, though poverty be their own lot. And those who are saved from their own greed –it is they who are the felicitous.[2]

The revelation of this holy verse was the result of seven people that fell wounded in the battle of Uḥud. They were seriously afflicted with thirst, some Muslims quickly brought water for them but the water was only enough for one of them. The water was presented to one of them, but he rejected it and pointed to another brother that probably needed it more than him. When the second brother sought to drink he heard the voice of another brother complaining of serious thirst, he then abstained and preferred his brother. In this manner each of them preferred his

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1– *Íayāt al-Imām al-Íasan (ʿa)*, vol. 1, p. 295.
2– *Surah Íashr* 59:9.

brother in faith over himself. After the seventh one rejected the water but when returning back to the first one, they found in turn that each of them had died.[1]

Truly, Islam inspired them with this tremendous spirit and kindled these noble ideals within their natures. They have become exemplars for all of humanity with the sublimity and exaltedness they have attained.

The most splendid sacrifice in Islam with a continuing effect is the sacrifice of the Household of the holy Prophet (ʿa), the upholders of the holy Qur'ān, and the Arks of Salvation for this nation. Verily, the holy Surah *Insān* has been revealed in their respect and its revelation, as agreed by Qur'ānic commentators, is because of the grandsons of the holy Prophet (ṣ), Ḥasan and Ḥusain (ʿa). When they were both sick, their grandfather along with several other Companions paid them a visit and told Imam ʿAlī to make an oath to Allah to fast for three days if they regain their health. The Leader of Ladies of the Two Worlds (Fāṭimah Zahrā') (ʿa) followed the Imam in his oath along with her maid *Fidhah*. When the Imams, Ḥasan and Ḥusain (ʿa), regained their health, they all fasted together. The Imam did not have food in the house so he bought three measures of barley on credit. On the first day Noble Zahrā' (ʿa) ground one measure of barley and baked bread with it. When it was time for them to break their fast a needy person knocked on their door requesting for assistance. They gave the baked bread and spent the night without eating anything. On the second day the Leader of the Ladies (ʿa) ground the second measure of barley and baked bread with it. At the time of breaking fast an orphan knocked their door complaining of hunger. Again they gave up their meal. On the third day, the Leader of the Ladies of the Two Worlds (ʿa) ground and baked bread with the remainder of the barley. At the time of breaking the fast a bondservant knocked their door complaining of hunger. They once more yielded their

1– *Majma' al-Bayān*, vol. 5, p. 960.

meal while they were trembling of weakness. That night the holy Prophet (ṣ) visited them and saw them trembling of hunger. This pained the holy Prophet and he said: "O woe! The Household of Muḥammad is dying of hunger!"

Angel Gabriel descended upon the holy Prophet (ṣ) holding *Surah Insān*[1] as an honor to the household of the holy Prophet for their sacrifice of a type that is hard to find in this world. Verily, they were being compensated by Almighty Allah with a Paradise adorned with silver. He made their remembrance eternal in this world and made them leaders and exemplars for the entire nation until the end of time.

Abstinence in Food and Intercourse

Chastity and abstinence are among the virtues Islam has called for. These are among the noblest attributes of the soul. Abstinence is to preserve your stomach and private parts from contamination with what was prohibited because excess in eating and in sexual relations have disadvantages that reduce human beings from a state of honor to the state of an animal that knows nothing except the needs of the stomach and private parts.

The holy Prophet (ṣ) has warned against excess satisfaction and too much inclination towards pleasure. He has said:

> The majority of those entering the hellfire in my nation do so because of two hollows: the stomach and the private parts.[2]

Imam Muḥammad Bāqir (ʿa) has said:

> There is no act of worship before Allah that is better

1– *Tafsīr Fakhr ar-Rāzī*, vol. 8, p. 392; *Rūh al-Bayān*, vol. 6, p. 546; *Asbāb Nuzūl*, p. 33; *Yanābī al-Mawaddah*, vol. 1, p. 93; and *Ar-Riyyad al-Nudrah*, vol. 2, p. 227.
2– *UÒūl al-Kāfī,* vol. 2, p. 79.

than abstinence in stomach and in the private parts.[1]

A man said to Imam Bāqir (ʿa): "I am weak in performing good deeds. I pray little and I fast very little but I struggle to not eat except what is permitted and not marry except the permitted marriage." The holy Imam (ʿa) honored him and said:

> What struggle is better than abstinence of the stomach and the private parts?[2]

Verily, abstinence is the best attribute of the soul because it indicates nobility of the soul and the sublimity and exaltation of the person's essence. It also makes the soul sound and frees it of greediness. Its evils reduce human beings to deep levels of depravity.

Contentment

Contentment is one of the manifest exalted attributes that human beings can be adorned with. It gives humans peace of mind and felicity, repels distress from them, and rescues them from the evil of greediness. It has been said regarding its loftiness that it is a treasure that never fades. Anyone that it is attributed to is the richest person and is sufficed with the wealth Almighty Allah has bestowed. Indeed Imam Bāqir (ʿa) has advised contentment to some of his special companions.

He has said:

> Be aware and do not let your eye aspire towards what is above you, likewise suffice yourselves with what Allah the Great and Almighty has said to His Prophet:
>
> وَلاَ تُعْجِبْكَ أَمْوَالُهُمْ وَأَوْلاَدُهُمْ

Let not their possessions or their children impress you. [3]

He has also said:

1– *Ibid*, p. 80.
2– *Al-Maḥāsin,* vol. 1, p. 292.
3– *Surah Tawbah* 9:85.

وَلَا تَمُدَّنَّ عَيْنَيْكَ إِلَى مَا مَتَّعْنَا بِهِ أَزْوَاجًا مِّنْهُمْ زَهْرَةَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنيَا

Do not extend your glance toward what We have provided certain groups of them as a glitter of the life of this world.[1]

> If anything comes to you in that respect you should remember the life of the Messenger of Allah (ṣ) because barley was his foodstuff, dates were his sweets, and palm leaves were his fuel if he could get hld of them.[2]

Imam Bāqir (ʿa) has said:

> Those who suffice themselves with what Allah has provided for them are the richest among the people.[3]

A great scholar named Khalīl ibn Aḥmad Farāhīdī suffered much difficulty in his economic life. Sulaymān ibn ʿAlī Abbāsī sent a message to him asking him, for a high price, to teach his child. In response Khalīl took out a piece of dried bread and said to him: "I do not have more than this and if I can obtain it I am not in need of Sulaymān and others like him." His messenger asked: "What do I tell him?" He replied: "Recite him this poem:

> "Tell Sulaymān that I am not in need of him
> That I am rich even though I have no money
> You should know that wretchedness is in the soul not in wealth
> Richness also is in the soul not in wealth
> Provision from the powerful cannot be decreased by the weak,
> Likewise the power of an imposter cannot increase one's provision."[4]

1– *Surah Óāhā* 20:131.
2– *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 2, p. 137.
3– *Al-Wāfi*, vol. 3, p. 78; *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 2, p. 139.
4– *Safinat al-Bihār*, vol. 1, p. 426.

The infidel Dawānīqī sent a letter to Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) the great man of this nation and the pioneer of its civilization wanting to add him to his entourage. The following sentence was included in his letter: *"Why do you not benefit us like you benefit others?."*

The descendent of the holy Prophet (ʿa) answered him as follows:

> There is nothing in this world that we can make you fear. You possessed nothing in the last day in which that we can make you hope. You possess no blessings for which we may congratulate you. You are not in difficulty for us to condole with you.[1]

Verily, this implies that the Imam (ʿa) did not have any worldly possessions which he feared their confiscation by Manṣūr. Also, Manṣūr did not have any virtue that makes a person closer to Allah. His record was clear of any good act but full of oppression and inequity. So how would the Imam go to him?

But in reality he wanted to deceive Imam so he wrote: Verily, if you accompany us we would take advice.

Behold the response of the Imam (ʿa) and the wisdom in it:

> Whoever is after this world would never advise you and whoever is after the hereafter would never accompany you.[2]

Truly, anyone who was after position and wealth in this world would not advise Manṣūr; rather, they would like him to perpetrate oppression and sin. On the other hand, those who seek Allah's pleasure would not accompany an infidel like Manṣūr.

The head and leader of the Umayyads, ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān, sent a bag of Dirham coins to the noble Companion of the holy

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1– *Mustadrak al-Wasā'il*, vol. 12, p. 307.
2– *Íayāt Imām aÒ-Ñādiq (ʿa)*, vol. 7, p. 144.

Prophet, Abūḍhar Ghifārī, who was Islam-conscious and believed in its fundamentals and aims. He thought he would accept it and stop opposing him but Abūḍhar rejected the bag from ʿUthmān's slave because he knew it as a deception but the slave insisted and urged him to accept it and said: "Please collect it because your acceptance of it is my freedom." Abūḍhar answered him as follows: "Verily my acceptance of it is your freedom while it is my bondage."

Indeed, in this there was servitude and bondage and abandonment of his opposition to ʿUthmān who would give the Muslims' wealth to the Umayyads and the family of Abī Muʿīṭ and left the burden upon the Muslims.

Detestable Attributes

Above, we discussed good and noble attributes that were bestowed upon human beings with which to make life luminous and we have mentioned some evil attributes during the discussion that are detested by Almighty Allah and draw human beings to low levels.

Verily, Islam has commended the noble fundamentals and has prohibited their opposites. This indicates the extent of the importance Islam lays on human beings. Islam endeavors to elevate human beings to the highest stage of perfection. Here, we will summarily take a look at some of the detestable attributes according to Islam.

Anger

Anger is considered to a vice. It is the source of sin and a key to all evils. A person in anger loses awareness and thought and becomes like a predatory animal that insults, beats, and kills. In this case, Almighty Allah names forgiveness during anger as the attribute of the elect believers.

The Most High has said:

وَإِذَا مَا غَضِبُوا هُمْ يَغْفِرُونَ

And they forgive when angered.[1]

Verily, the guided Imams have warned against this vice in many Narrations including the following:

1. Imam ʿAlī, the Commander of the Faithful (ʿa), has said:

> Be wary of anger because it is a great soldier among the soldiers of Satan.[2]

2. Imam ʿAlī, the Commander of the Faithful (ʿa), has said:

> Anger is a form of madness since regret follows it. Persons who do not regret their anger, their madness is deeply rooted.[3]

3. Imam Bāqir (ʿa) has said:

> Verily, a person that enters the state of anger will never be pleased until finally the person enters the hellfire.[4]

4. Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) cited his father thus: "A villager came to the holy Messenger of Allah (ṣ) and said to him: 'I live in the desert and want you to teach me words that comprise everything'. The holy Prophet replied: "Do not become angry." The Bedouin repeated his statement three times and the holy Prophet answered him the same. The Bedouin said: "The Messenger of Allah (ṣ) did not order me except to what is good." Imam Ṣādiq cited from his father: "What is more severe than anger? Verily a person in a state of anger may kill a soul that God has prohibited to kill or accuse a decent woman."[5]

Verily, reprehensible anger is the anger that takes a person away from moderation and into tremendous evil.

1– *Surah Shurā* 42:37.
2 *Nahj al-Balāghah*, p. 459.
3– *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 19, p. 66.
4– *UÒūl al-Kāfī,* vol. 2, p. 302.
5– *Ibid*, vol 2, p. 303.

To be angry with those who condemn Islam or those who slander the nobility of the chosen believers is not regarded as reprehensible anger because such anger has been set in the right place and is regarded as a good act, enjoining of good, and forbidding of evil, if it does not cause any harm. Books of ethics enumerate causes of anger and ways to treat it.

Bad Disposition

Among the detestable attributes is having a bad disposition. It is regarded as a despicable attribute that everyone is repelled from. It does not leave any friends or even family for a person. Indeed, Almighty Allah has addressed the great Prophet with the following verse:

وَلَوْ كُنتَ فَظًّا غَلِيظَ الْقَلْبِ لاَنفَضُّواْ مِنْ حَوْلِكَ

...And had you been harsh and hardhearted, surely they would have scattered from around you.[1]

Verily the holy Prophet (ṣ) has warned against having a bad disposition and said:

> Refrain from having a bad temperament because without doubt the place of bad temperaments is in the hellfire.[2]

He has also said:

> Allah the Great and Exalted shall not grant repentance to persons with bad behavior.

It was asked of the holy Prophet (ṣ), "Why is that?" He replied:

> Because after such persons repent they perform even greater sins.[3]

Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) has said:

1– *Surah Àl 'Imrān* 3:159.
2– *'Uyūn al-Akhbār al-RiÃdā*, vol. 2, p. 31.
3– *UÒūl al-Kāfī,* vol. 2, p. 321.

> Those whose behavior becomes bad punish themselves.[1]

A many such Narrations have been recorded in books of ethics. They warn the Muslims from becoming attributed with this detestable behavior.

Obsession for Worldly Things

Obsession is among the evil tendencies which Islam condemns. It is a vice that prevents its fellows from performing good acts, having positive relationships with relatives, and doing good for the poor. Indeed, the Imams from the Household of the holy Prophet (ʿa) have condemned this type of behavior. Below are some of their Narrations in this regard:

1. Imam Muḥammad Bāqir (ʿa) has said:

> The similitude of a person that obsesses for this world is like a silkworm, the more it spins threads around itself the harder it is to come out until it dies of sorrow.[2]

2. Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) has said:

> It is stated in a Divine Narration (ḥadīth qudsī) that if a descendant of Adam possessed two valleys flowing with gold and silver, he or she would seek for a third valley. O child of Adam! Verily your stomach is a sea among seas and a valley among valleys, nothing fills it except soil.[3]

3. Imam Ḥasan Zakī (ʿa) has said:

> Human beings are ruined through three things: arrogance, obsession, and envy. With arrogance the religion is ruined, with it Satan was damned. Obsession is the enemy of the soul and with it Adam was driven out of the paradise. Envy is the pioneer of

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1– *Ibid*.
2– *Al-Wāfī*, vol. 2, p. 316.
3– *Man lā Yahduruh al-Faqīh*, vol. 2, p. 418.

all evils, it caused Cain (Qābīl) to kill Abel (Hābīl).[1]

Verily, obsession for the world drives human beings to toilsome struggles and arduous endeavors to seek wealth from any source. Such a person does not care whether it is by permissible or forbidden means. It prevents human beings from good acts, helping the poor, maintaining ties with relatives, and other acts that make a person closer to Almighty Allah.

Stinginess

Stinginess is among the detestable attributes and it is the most evil human tendencies. The holy Qur'ān and Traditions of the holy Prophet (ṣ) have warned against it because it encompasses all evil behaviors. Below are some verses and Narrations in this respect.

Stinginess according to the Holy Qur'ān

Verses that condemn stinginess or warn against it are as follows:

1. The Most High has said:

الَّذِينَ يَبْخَلُونَ وَيَأْمُرُونَ النَّاسَ بِالْبُخْلِ وَيَكْتُمُونَ مَا آتَاهُمُ اللّهُ مِن فَضْلِهِ وَأَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابًا مُّهِينًا

Those who are stingy and bid [other] people to be stingy, and conceal whatever Allah has given them out of His grace; and We have prepared for the faithless a humiliating punishment.[2]

Verily, Almighty Allah has prepared hellfire whose fuel is human beings and stones for those who are stingy because of their stinginess and not spending their wealth in the cause of Almighty Allah.

2. The Most High has said:

هَاأَنتُمْ هَؤُلَاء تُدْعَوْنَ لِتُنفِقُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَمِنكُم مَّن يَبْخَلُ وَمَن يَبْخَلْ فَإِنَّمَا

1– *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 75, p. 111.
2– *Surah Nisā'* 4:37.

يَبْخَلُ عَن نَّفْسِهِ وَاللَّهُ الْغَنِيُّ وَأَنتُمُ الْفُقَرَاء

Ah! There you are, being invited to spend in the way of Allah; yet among you there are those who are stingy; and whoever is stingy is stingy only to himself. Allah is the All-sufficient, and you are all-needy, and if you turn away He will replace you with another people, and they will not be like you.[1]

Indeed, those who are afflicted with the disease of stinginess do not spend time or money for any good deed and they think only of how to accumulate money and amass wealth, unaware that stinginess is to their own detriment because the wealth which they greed after will be left behind when they go to their graves and the felicitation will be for others while the responsibility will be upon them.

3. Almighty Allah has said:

وَلاَ يَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ يَبْخَلُونَ بِمَا آتَاهُمُ اللّهُ مِن فَضْلِهِ هُوَ خَيْرًا لَّهُمْ بَلْ هُوَ شَرٌّ لَّهُمْ سَيُطَوَّقُونَ مَا بَخِلُواْ بِهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ

Let the stingy not suppose that [their grudging] what Allah has given them out of His grace is good for them; rather it is bad for them. They will be collared with what they grudge on the Day of Resurrection.[2]

The verse relates the outcome of those who are stingy about the favor which Almighty Allah has bestowed upon them. They think that this is better for them but they know not that such wealth shall be a collar on their necks casting them into the hellfire on the Day of Resurrection.

Some Narrations censuring misers have been cited as follows:

1. Imam ʿAlī, the Commander of the Faithful (ʿa), has said:

1– *Surah Mūḥammad* (Ò) 47:38.
2– *Surah Àl ʿImrān* 3:180.

> I am in wonder of misers in that they make headway towards the poverty which they seek to flee from and the wealth they seek misses them. Thus they live in this world like poor persons and will be judged on the Day of Resurrection as rich persons.[1]

2. Imam Ṣādiq reported from his father (ʿa) that the Messenger of Allah (ṣ) said:

> An openhanded person is closer to God, closer to the people, and closer to the paradise, whereas a miser is far from Allah, far from the people, and closer to the hellfire.[2]

3. As exegesis of the following saying of Almighty Allah:

كَذَلِكَ يُرِيهِمُ اللّهُ أَعْمَالَهُمْ حَسَرَاتٍ عَلَيْهِمْ

Thus shall Allah show them their deeds as regrets for themselves.[3]

Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) has said:

> This verse indicates a person who abstains from spending wealth in obedience of Allah due to stinginess then dies and leaves it for those who use it in obedience to Almighty Allah or in disobedience to Almighty Allah. If it was used in obedience to Almighty Allah, the Great and the Most Exalted, the person will see its interest on another person's account and regret that that it had been his or her own wealth. And if it was used in disobedience to Almighty Allah, the person has strengthened the inheritors with that wealth so that it is used in disobedience of Almighty Allah.[4]

1– *Jāmi' al-Akhbār*, p. 131.
2– *Mustadrak al-Wasā'il*, vol. 7, p. 13.
3– *Surah Baqarah* 2:167.
4– *Furū' al-Kāfī*, vol. 4, p. 42.

These are examples of Narrations that indicate the punishment of the miser. They draw severe punishment upon themselves especially if the greed is related to the money which Almighty Allah has made incumbent such as *Khums* –i.e. one fifth of profit after expenditures– and *Zakāt* (alms-giving), because its reckoning will be tough and the punishment will be tremendous. With this we come to the end of the discussion on systems of training in Islam.

ECONOMIC LIFE

Islam has developed an advanced economic system for Muslims designated by comfort. This system resolves the needs of the people and puts an end to destitution and deprivation. It rescues nations from economic difficulties that storm societies and destroy their security and stability keeping them in a state of chaos, retardation and deterioration.

Below are Islamic methods and stipulations for solving economic problems:

Attention to Work and Occupation

Work occupies an elevated position in Islam and even has traces of sanctification, which include:

1. Working is an honorable act
2. Working is the manner of the holy Prophets
3. Working is regarded as struggle in Allah's way
4. Working is regarded as worship

Islam has given work a sacred aspect because it is the sole source of creating benefits for society and because, without doubt, idleness creates many problems and paralyzes the economic development of a country. It is not possible for a country to advance when the civilization of the nation has sunk into the darkness of idleness and puts work aside.

The Most High said:

هُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ الْأَرْضَ ذَلُولًا فَامْشُوا فِي مَنَاكِبِهَا وَكُلُوا مِن رِّزْقِهِ وَإِلَيْهِ النُّشُورُ

He it is Who made the earth subservient to you, so go about in the spacious sides thereof, and eat of His sustenance. And to Him is the rising (after death).[1]

In this respect the holy Prophet (ṣ) embraced and kissed the hands of a worker saying:

This hand is loved by Allah and His Messenger.

The hands that build life are those that work and bring about production, the source of economic life in the world, in all its forms and aspects; it is impossible for any nation to rise if it is weary and resorts to rest and repose.

Indeed, in Islam work is among the pillars of economic advancement in civilization and Islam has emphasized the importance of agricultural production as being the backbone of the economy of the advent of Islam.

It is worth mentioning that Marxists considered work to be the cornerstone of all values and many people built upon its philosophy which stands upon resistance to individual possession in all its forms prevents the private sector from ownership. Indeed, Marxism was a violent attack on world capitalism and was considered as the thief of youths.

I have mentioned in the book entitled *Al-Amal wa Ḥuqūq al-Āmil fi al-Islam,* i.e. *Work and the rights of workers in Islam*, that the communist ideology is not based on sound belief and thought. Many great world economists have made observations regarding this ideology that its assessments are not in line with the natural tendencies of human beings and expectations during life. The downfall of the Soviet Union, one of the countries that

1– *Surah Mulk* 67:15.

propounded this belief, reveals its weaknesses.

To sum up, work is one of the most important focuses in Islam and with it there is growth in life, agriculture, industry and crafts.

All Wealth is Allah's

Wealth in Islamic law belongs to Allah, the Most High, and human beings are allotted different proportions of it. Humans do not have the right to make wealth into playthings. The holy Qur'ān has emphasized this concept:

Almighty Allah has said:

لِّلَّهِ ما فِي السَّمَاواتِ وَمَا فِي الأَرْضِ

To Allah belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth.[1]

He also said:

قُل لِّمَنِ الْأَرْضُ وَمَن فِيهَا إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ سَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّهِ قُلْ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ

Say: If you know, tell me to whom belong the earth and what is therein. They will say, 'To Allah.' Say: Will you not then take admonition?[2]

And Almighty Allah said:

وَآتُوهُم مِّن مَّالِ اللَّهِ الَّذِي آتَاكُمْ

And give them out of the wealth of Allah which He has bestowed upon you.[3]

Therefore, wealth is neither owned by the private sector nor by a nation. Islam looks deeply into this conviction and has specified precautionary measures regarding it, as explained in

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1– *Surah Baqarah* 2:284.
2– *Surah Mu'minūn 23*:84-85.
3– *Surah Nūr* 24:33.

the following section.

Wealth in the Private Sector
Wealth that belongs to the private sector is of different forms:

Enhancement of Wealth
Every human being is free to enhance and increase his wealth albeit through permitted and legal means, and this is referred to as lawful enhancement; however, human beings have been prohibited from increasing their wealth through the following means:

1. Usury
Islam has prohibited usurious gain because it results in spread of indigence and economic unrest, it stunts the economy, and it destroys the sense of love and compassion among people. Islam considers usury to be an evil that entails tremendous sin and its law strictly prohibits it.

Almighty Allah has said in the Qur'ān:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُواْ اتَّقُواْ اللّهَ وَذَرُواْ مَا بَقِيَ مِنَ الرِّبَا إِن كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ فَإِن لَّمْ تَفْعَلُواْ فَأْذَنُواْ بِحَرْبٍ مِّنَ اللّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَإِن تُبْتُمْ فَلَكُمْ رُؤُوسُ أَمْوَالِكُمْ لاَ تَظْلِمُونَ وَلاَ تُظْلَمُونَ وَإِن كَانَ ذُو عُسْرَةٍ فَنَظِرَةٌ إِلَى مَيْسَرَةٍ وَأَن تَصَدَّقُواْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ

O you who have faith! Be wary of Allah, and abandon [all claims to] what remains of usury, should you be faithful. And if you do not, then be prepared to face war from Allah and His apostle. If you repent, then you may retain your principal, neither harming others, nor suffering harm. And if you [the debtor] is in straits, let there be a respite until the time of ease; and if you remit [the debt] as charity, it will be better for you, if you only knew.[1]

The Most High said:

1– *Surah Baqarah* 2:278-280.

الَّذِينَ يَأْكُلُونَ الرِّبَا لاَ يَقُومُونَ إِلاَّ كَمَا يَقُومُ الَّذِي يَتَخَبَّطُهُ الشَّيْطَانُ مِنَ الْمَسِّ

Those who devour usury will not stand except as stands one deranged by the Devil's touch.[1]

These verses of the holy Qur'ān have portrayed the condition of the usurer as one touched with insanity that goes around, giving and taking money without any consideration except to accumulate wealth and achieve domination over people and their wealth by taking it illegitimately.

Verily the holy Prophet has prohibited usury and considered it as great crime.

He (ṣ) said:

> Whoever devours usury, Allah shall fill his stomach with hell fire in the amount he has consumed and when he achieves something through usury, Allah shall not accept his works and he will not break free of the damnation of Allah and the angels even if only a carat is still in his possession.[2]

Imam ʿAlī, the Commander of the Faithful (ʿa), has said:

> There is no difference between the devourer of usury, the agent that dispenses the usurious money, the writer of the usurious contract, and the witness to such a contract.[3]

Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) said:

> The sin of a dirham of usury is greater than seventy fornications with prohibited woman all committed in the house of God (Kaʿbah).[4]

1– *Surah Baqarah* 2:275.
2– *Wasā'il ash-Shī'ah*, vol. 18, p. 122.
3– *Furū' al-Kāfī*, vol. 5, p. 144.
4– *Wasā'il ash-Shī'ah*, vol. 18, p. 123.

This intensification of the seriousness of usury and the severe punishment upon a usurer results because usury is regarded to be deprivation of the poor in the society!

Usury is one means used by imperialists to establish economic invasion which paves the way for military occupation in countries that take loans from capitalists and are subsequently unable to settle their debts.

2. Hoarding

Hoarding prevents increase and enhancement of wealth because it can lead to the spread of misery and poverty among people.

The Messenger of Allah (ṣ) said:

> No one hoards foodstuff except a sinful person.[1]

He (ṣ) also said:

> He who hoards food for forty days has precluded himself from Allah and His Messenger.[2]

The Commander of the Faithful, Imam ʻAlī (ʻa), spoke with Malik al-Ashtar during his administration about the crime of hoarding:

> Know this, a lot of them (i.e. among the marketers and craft owners) are exorbitant, hoard goods, and dominate trade; indeed, this is detrimental to the general public and officials are held accountable, so prevent hoarding because the holy Prophet (ṣ) prevented it. Permit legitimate buying according to the balance of justice. Prices should not be biased towards the buyer or the seller of the goods. Whoever engages in hoarding after you have forbidden it should be made an example of but do not punish them in excess.[3]

1– *Man lā Yahduruh al-Faqīh*, vol. 3, p. 261.
2– *Mustadrak al-Wasā'il*, vol. 13, p. 273.
3– *Nahj al-Balāghah*, p. 438.

Verily the Islamic government is responsible to protect its inhabitants from hoarding and it is upon the government to prevent it. The government is also responsible to control the prices in the general interest without causing any harm to owners.

3. Selling Wine and Narcotic Substances

Dealing in wine and narcotic substances, whether buying or selling, is a prohibited economic activity in Islam. This is because of the severe damage it causes to health and general life. We have mentioned the terrible damage caused by wine in previous discussions.

4. Fraud

Islam has prohibited fraud and cheating in transactions. In other words, buying goods at less than the normal market price or selling at more than the normal sum is prohibited, whether or not the other party to the contract is aware of the real price, such as selling an item for fifty percent or more over the normal price. Consequently, Islam has given the right of revocation to the person who is defrauded in order to amend the damages caused to him.

5. Exploitation

A fundamental of economic activity in Islam is prevention of exploitation of any human being by another human being. Likewise, it is not permitted for any nation to exploit a human being.

6. Fraud in Measurement

Islam has warned against enhancement of wealth through fraud in weights and measures.

The Most High has said:

وَيْلٌ لِّلْمُطَفِّفِينَ الَّذِينَ إِذَا اكْتَالُواْ عَلَى النَّاسِ يَسْتَوْفُونَ وَإِذَا كَالُوهُمْ أَو وَّزَنُوهُمْ يُخْسِرُونَ أَلَا يَظُنُّ أُولَئِكَ أَنَّهُم مَّبْعُوثُونَ لِيَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ يَوْمَ يَقُومُ النَّاسُ

لِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

Woe to the defrauders, who use short measures; who when they measure [a commodity bought] from the people take the full measure, but diminish when they measure or weigh for others. Do they not know that they will be resurrected on a tremendous day –a day when humankind will stand before the Lord of all the worlds?[1]

And the Most High has said:

وَأَقِيمُوا الْوَزْنَ بِالْقِسْطِ وَلَا تُخْسِرُوا الْمِيزَانَ

Maintain weight with justice, and do not fall short in measurement.[2]

Verily, wealth that results from fraud in measurement is usurpation and one is not permitted to use such wealth. It is also incumbent on the usurper to return it to its owner.

The foregoing discussions were regarding prohibitions on expansion of individual wealth.

Freezing of a Person's Wealth

According to Islam, an individual's wealth is frozen and they are not permitted to spend it in the following cases:

Squandering

Among the features of Islam is a prohibition on squandering wealth and spending it in illegitimate ways.

The Most High has said:

وَلاَ تُبَذِّرْ تَبْذِيرًا إِنَّ الْمُبَذِّرِينَ كَانُواْ إِخْوَانَ الشَّيَاطِينِ وَكَانَ الشَّيْطَانُ لِرَبِّهِ كَفُورًا

1– *Surah MuÔaffifin* 83:1-6.
2– *Surah Raḥmān* 55:9.

...and do not squander wastefully. Indeed the wasteful are fellows of the Satans, and Satan is ever ungrateful to his Lord.[1]

Therefore, for a squanderer that wrongly disposes of his wealth it is compulsory to freeze his wealth and nothing will be given to him of his wealth except the amount that fulfills his needs; likewise, Islam has forbidden giving wealth to the feeble-minded, because they might squander it and spend it illegally.

The Most High has said in the Qur'an:

وَلاَ تُؤْتُواْ السُّفَهَاء أَمْوَالَكُمُ الَّتِي جَعَلَ اللّهُ لَكُمْ قِيَامًا وَارْزُقُوهُمْ فِيهَا وَاكْسُوهُمْ وَقُولُواْ لَهُمْ قَوْلًا مَّعْرُوفًا

Do not give the feeble-minded your property which Allah has assigned you to manage: provide for them out of it, and clothe them, and speak to them honorable words.[2]

The following are discussions connected with individual wealth and economic balance.

Moderation in Spending

Islam guides people towards moderation in disposition and spending. It also distances people from both stinginess and reckless spending.

The Most High said:

وَلاَ تَجْعَلْ يَدَكَ مَغْلُولَةً إِلَى عُنُقِكَ وَلاَ تَبْسُطْهَا كُلَّ الْبَسْطِ فَتَقْعُدَ مَلُومًا مَّحْسُورًا

Do not keep your hand chained to your neck nor open it altogether so that you become blameworthy, regretful.[3]

The verse has determined a limit of spending that fulfills the

1– *Surah Isrā'* 17:26-27.
2– *Surah Nisā'* 4:5.
3– *Surah Isrā'* 17:29.

demands of human beings.

Public Wealth

Islam takes serious precautions with regard to the public treasury. Neither the president of a country nor any other member of the government has the right to use or amuse himself with public funds; rather, they must use the public treasury unerringly for the affairs of Muslims, especially for the following:

1. Spread of knowledge through building Islamic primary and secondary schools, colleges, universities and so on

2. Tutors, teachers, professors, and researchers for which it is necessary to create a positive atmosphere in the economic system, like building houses for them and supplying other needs

3. Establishment of hospitals, clinics, maternity wards, dispensaries and other medical needs that are necessities that cannot be forfeited in the contemporary age.

4. Reform projects, the most important of which is making known fundamental principles and the exalted exemplar of Islam and spreading the religion among the public through television, radio programs and local newspapers in order to reinforce the virtues of Islam in the young generation

5. Payments to the poor among workers whose salary is not sufficient (it is incumbent upon the government to spend on the poor to meet their needs and this is one of the splendid aspects of the economic system in Islam)

6. Payment of debts of those who are unable to do so, including debts incurred for marriages, buying or building homes and other needs of this type, because the Islamic government is responsible to fulfill such needs, and in this respect it has been reported in the hadith that:

Whoever dies leaving behind a debt, it is upon us (i.e.

the Infallibles) to settle it.[1]

Imam Mūsā ibn Jaʿfar (ʿa) said:

> Whoever seeks wealth through its lawful channels in order to spend it for himself and his family is like one who has fought in the cause of God, the Most High. If he is overcome [with poverty], he should request a loan for what will suffice his family and this is upon Allah and his Messenger. If he dies and is unable to settle the loan, then it is upon the Imam to do so. If it is not settled by the Imam, the burden is upon him nonetheless. Verily Allah the Great and most Exalted says:

إِنَّمَا الصَّدَقَاتُ لِلْفُقَرَاء وَالْمَسَاكِينِ وَالْعَامِلِينَ عَلَيْهَا وَالْمُؤَلَّفَةِ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَفِي الرِّقَابِ وَالْغَارِمِينَ

Charity is only for the poor, the needy, those employed to [collect and distribute] it, those [possible converts] whose hearts are being reconciled [to yours], for [the freedom of] captives and the debtors...[2]

> And surely such a person is poor, in need, and a debtor.[3]

7. Spending upon those who are unable to work due to sickness or old age, provided that person does not have money or children that are able to support him. Under such circumstances, it is the responsibility of the government to provide support in order that such people not be forced to beg.

8. Spending upon the incapacitated is also the responsibility of the government in addition to other services. During the government of Imam ʿAlī (ʿa), the Imam said to Malik al-Ashtar:

> Be mindful of God! Be mindful of God in regard to

1– *Saḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 3, p. 223.
2– *Surah Tawbah* 9:60.
3– *Hayāt al-Imām Mūsā ibn Jaʿfar*, vol. 1, p. 223.

those in lower economic classes who have no power, i.e. the poor, the needy, the wretched, and those who are unable to work due to deformity; because some among this group beg but others do not beg even though their economic situation is difficult.[1]

Taxes

Taxes are among the Islamic economic provisions that are used to fight against poverty and destitution. Islamic taxes include:

Almsgiving (Zakāt)

Islam places great importance on almsgiving *(zakāt)*, thus it is coupled with obligatory prayer in the holy Qur'ān and there is no verse in which Allah has ordered prayer where it is not coupled with almsgiving.

The Most High has said:

فَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ

So maintain the prayer and give the zakat.[2]

The Most High has also said:

فَإِن تَابُواْ وَأَقَامُواْ الصَّلاَةَ وَآتَوُاْ الزَّكَاةَ فَإِخْوَانُكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ

Yet if they repent and maintain the prayer and give the zakat, then they are your brethren in faith.[3]

It is an imperative obligation that governments take up arms with whoever refuses to pay the religious alms, because Islam has dedicated alms to be used to fight against poverty and misery, to provide individuals in the society their present and future needs and to guarantee them and their families a suitable standard of living.

Indeed receiving alms should not be an unpleasant experience.

1– *Nahj al-Balāghah*, p. 438.
2– *Surah Íajj* 22:78.
3– *Surah Tawbah* 9:11.

In addition, it is not a handout from the government or from any individual; rather, it is the right of the poor and the needy.

The Most High has said:

وَفِي أَمْوَالِهِمْ حَقٌّ لِلسَّائِلِ وَالْمَحْرُومِ

And there was a share in their wealth for the beggar and the deprived.[1]

Indeed the poor and the deprived have a right to a portion of the wealth of the wealthy and the poor do not become indebted to the wealthy in this regard.

The following is a concise discussion of this matter:

Those upon whom Almsgiving (zakāt) is Obligatory

Zakāt is obligatory upon mature sane persons, but is not obligatory upon children and the insane due to narrations in this respect; likewise, it is not compulsory for a slave because a slave does not possess any wealth.

Things Use for Almsgiving (zakāt)

The following are assessed for almsgiving:

Three types of livestock: camels, cows and sheep

Four types of crops: wheat, barley, dates and grapes

Coin(s): gold and silver.

Indeed, it is recommended to pay *zakāt* on other crops as well, like rice, lentils, Indian peas, chickpeas, etc. in the same compulsory quantity as the aforementioned items, which has been discussed in books of jurisprudence.

Those who Merit Receiving Almsgiving:

The Qur'ānic text has specified the division of *zakāt*. The Most High has said:

1– *Surah al-Úāriyāt* verse 19.

إِنَّمَا الصَّدَقَاتُ لِلْفُقَرَاء وَالْمَسَاكِينِ وَالْعَامِلِينَ عَلَيْهَا وَالْمُؤَلَّفَةِ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَفِي الرِّقَابِ وَالْغَارِمِينَ وَفِي سَبِيلِ اللّهِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ فَرِيضَةً مِّنَ اللّهِ وَاللّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ

Charity is only for the poor, the needy, those employed to [collect and distribute] it, those [possible converts] whose hearts are being reconciled [to yours], for [the freedom of] captives and debtors, and in the way of Allah, and for the traveller. [This is] ordained from Allah, and Allah is All-knowing, All-wise.[1]

Here, the holy Qur'ān has expounded those that are entitled to zakāt.

1- 2- The poor and the needy: Neither of these groups possesses yearly provisions that are suited to their condition and that of their family. However, economically the condition of the needy is worse than that of the poor.

3- Those employed to collect alms: These people are engaged in collecting charity from various places and taxpayers. They must be paid for the job they do. These employees receive their wages from the alms whether they are rich or poor because every job has its wages.

4- Those whose hearts are being reconciled: These are Muslims that do not having strong faith for whom alms could impress Islamic fundamentals in their hearts.

5- Captives/slaves: These are captives whose price of freedom has been determined by contract but are unable to pay. In this case, there is no difference between conditional and unconditional contracts.

6- Debtors: Those who are indebted and are not able to pay their debts, on the condition that the money was not spent on a

1– *Surah Tawbah* 9:60.

prohibited act.

7- Travellers: Travellers whose provisions have been exhausted and are not able to return to their own towns are given enough funds to return home.

8- In the way of Allah: This comprises all works in the way of Allah, such as constructing archways, mosques, schools, making reconciliation and other public services.

It is not necessary for alms to include all these eight divisions; rather, charity can be spent in one area. Indeed, almsgiving is a societal system that protects the balance between different levels of the people of a nation and precludes poverty and begging. It is the society's guarantee to provide every needy person with all his basic needs and those of his family and dependents.

Zakāt al-Fiṭrah

This type of *zakāt* is compulsory from the eve of the Ramadan feast (‘”d al-Fiṭr). The time of paying this zakāt is from dawn of the feast day until midday. The compulsory amount to be given is one measurement *(sā'a)* of wheat, barley, rice, dates, grapes, etc.

Those that merit receiving this type of *zakāt* are the same eight categories previously mentioned; however, it is prohibited for descendants of the holy Prophet *(Hāshemite)* to receive this *zakāt* although it is permissible that a Hāshemite give this amount to another Hāshemite. Regarding the measurement, it amounts to three kilograms or its equivalent in cash. It is stressed that if the Muslims pay this *zakāt* it will be sufficient to help large numbers of poor people and decrease neediness.

In fact, the problem of poverty is at the forefront of the Islamic economic system. Islam has provided many laws that help bring about the elimination of poverty. In addition to *zakāt,* there are other injunctions regarding spending by the rich on their close relatives and other recommended charities and also donations

by the Islamic government, all of which are aimed to eliminate poverty from society.

Khums (one fifth of profit after expenditure)

Khums is an income tax with great importance due to tremendousness of its revenue that can be spent for Islamic institutions and other projects that benefit people.

As for this tax, there is a clear text in its respect in the holy Qur'ān.

The Most High has said:

وَاعْلَمُواْ أَنَّمَا غَنِمْتُم مِّن شَيْءٍ فَأَنَّ لِلّهِ خُمُسَهُ وَلِلرَّسُولِ وَلِذِي الْقُرْبَى وَالْيَتَامَى وَالْمَسَاكِينِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ إِن كُنتُمْ آمَنتُمْ بِاللّهِ وَمَا أَنزَلْنَا عَلَى عَبْدِنَا يَوْمَ الْفُرْقَانِ يَوْمَ الْتَقَى الْجَمْعَانِ وَاللّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

Know that whatever thing you may come by, a fifth of it is for Allah and the Apostle, for the relatives and the orphans, for the needy and the traveller, if you have faith in Allah and what We sent down to Our servant on the Day of Separation, the day when the two hosts met; and Allah has power over all things.[1]

Abubakr has abolished this type of tax which is regarded by jurists as *ijtihād* against the clear text of the Qur'ān. In my opinion, political ambitions caused him to abolish khums probably to weaken the partisans of the Commander of the Faithful so that they could not oppose Abubakr. It was an economical war aimed at weakening the power of the political opposition.

The supporters of the household of the holy Prophet (ʿa) remained true to this verse of the holy Qur'ān and other successive texts from the Imams of the Household of the holy Prophet (ʿa) regarding the obligation of this tax.

1– *Surah Anfāl* 8:41.

Payment of Khums

Items upon which khums is due are stipulated by the Shi'a Jurists based on authoritative texts in this respect. These items include the following:

1- Spoils of war: Items acquired through war with the unbelievers, there is no difference whether the war is fought with the permission of the holy Imam (ʿa) or not, but the one-fifth rule does not pertain to the entirety of what is acquired from other than war, the one-fifth must be applied after expenditures.

2- Mineral resources: These include resources like petrol, gold, silver, brimstone, copper and any other mineral resources. The one fifth tax paid on the aforementioned resources must be paid when the value reaches a stipulated amount, which is twenty Gold Dinar--equivalent to three mithqals of gold. There are also other conditions that are mentioned by the jurists in their books on the practical laws of Islam.

3- Treasure: This is wealth that has been hidden under the ground or in other places, on the condition that the finder knows that it is not owned by a Muslim. In addition, there are other conditions mentioned in this respect by jurists.

4- Items taken from the sea: These include things that are removed, for example by pearl divers, from the sea such as jewelry, sperm whales and so on, but not including fish and other sea animals.

5- Land bought from a Muslim by a free non-Muslim living under Muslim rule: It is compulsory to give khums on both farmland and other types of land in this regard.

6- Lawful wealth that is mixed with unlawful wealth: provided the unlawful amount is not known and cannot be discovered or its owner is not known, one fifth of the total amount must be removed before it can be used.

7- Surplus after annual expenditure: Khums must be paid on surplus income of businesses, companies, farms, etc. This includes all surplus like gifts, donations, and income from specific and general mortmain properties. There are different types of endowment as mentioned by the jurists in this respect.

Those Who can Receive Khums

During the occultation of the holy Imam *(may our souls be sacrificed for him),* those that can receive a portion of khums are two groups: the portion of the holy Imam (ʿa) and the portion of Hāshemites, their orphans, their needy and their travellers, although having faith in Allah is a general condition for receiving khums as well as poverty for orphans. As for the portion of the holy Imam (ʿa), it is spent in such a way that it would please the Imam (ʿa). The most important among such causes are spending khums to promote the religion, raise the banner of Islam, spread knowledge of its fundamentals and laws, print books that teach Islamic fundamentals and reply to criticisms against Islam. The spending of khums must be under the supervision of an Islamic authority i.e. a trusted jurist that knows what pleases the Imam of the Age.

With this we end the discussion about the Islamic economic system which is among the important affairs of Islamic life.

THE END OF HUMAN LIFE IN THIS WORLD

Islam accompanies human beings in all stages of their lives and has not left any feature of the various aspects of life without providing a method for its betterment. Islam has formulated the most sublime laws for the final stage of humanity's existence in this world. However, before discussing this issue, we will take a look at the view of Islam concerning death.

Inevitability of Death

Death is inevitability for all living things and there is no doubt that every human being will drink the cup of death. The Most High has said:

كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَآئِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ

Every soul shall taste death.[1]

Also the Most High said:

أَيْنَمَا تَكُونُواْ يُدْرِككُّمُ الْمَوْتُ وَلَوْ كُنتُمْ فِي بُرُوجٍ مُّشَيَّدَةٍ

Wherever you may be, death shall overtake you, even if you are in fortified towers.[2]

Indeed human aspirations, pride, distinction brought about by wealth, knowledge and position all vanish.

Shawqi says:

1– *Surah Àl 'Imrān* 3: 185.
2– *Surah Nisā'* 4:78.

Pride has abandoned the proud and has indeed passed away
Today, the sovereignty of rulers is buried within the earth

Verily all worldly enjoyment must cease to exist and everything advances towards non-existence. Rich men must let go of their wealth, which will be owned by others after their deaths. Likewise kings, presidents of republics and ministers are buried under the soil. How splendid is the poem that Imam ʿAlī al-Hadi (ʿa) attested before the infidel Mutawakil al-Abbāsi, who indulged in debauchery and immorality throughout the entire days of his government. He demanded that the Imam (ʿa) recite some poetry for him, thinking the Imam would commend his kingship. The holy Imam answered him with the following poem which intoxicates the mind and put an end to Mutawakil's self-conceit and imprudence, and caused him to weep for his past deeds. The holy Imam (ʿa) recited the poem as follows:

They spent the night at the top of the mountain while they were being secured by powerful men, but the hilltop did not benefit them
They were taken down after the pride of their high rank and laid in a hole; in truth, their descent was a bad one
The fragrant called upon them after they were buried: Where are the dynasty, the thrones, and the crown?
Where are the happy faces saturated in blessings, without which the protection and the crown is lost?
The grave makes clear the answer to the question: Here they are, where worms writhe.
Many years they passed in drinking and eating, now they are devoured themselves.[1]

This poem is splendid in its complete description of the world. Another is the composition of ʿUdayy ibn Zayd:

O you that is deluded by time who is rejoicing for another

1– *Hayāt Imām ʿAlī al-Hādī (ʿa)*, p. 260.

person's misfortune, are you exempted from the misfortune or do you have a firm covenant with the days? Rather you are deceitful and ignorant. Who has seen anyone flee the vicissitudes of time? Who has seen death abandon somebody eternally? And what can prevent the oppression of the oppressed? Where is Kasra Anushirvan and where is king Sābūr that came before him? Where are the children of the honorable king of Rome? There is nothing remaining of them worth mentioning. Where is the brother of Khidr when he built in Dijlah[1] where the waters of khabur[2] flowed? It has ceased to exist because of the vicissitudes of time did not grant it leave. The king is dead and people have migrated from its gates. He built his palace from marble and adorned it with lime but now birds in nests atop its spires. Recall the Lord of Khurnaq who one day reigned supreme? Think and you will attain guidance. He was pleased with his condition and the abundance of what he had possessed to the sea in Sadeer[3]. Then he changed his mind and said: There is no happiness in a living being that speeds toward death. After success, kingship, and treasure the grave conceals them. Their destiny is to become as dried leaves and the breezes from the east and the west sweep them away.

This is an accurate description of the world, its deceit, and the annihilation of kings even with all their power.

Another personage worth mentioning here is a great poet by name of Mahdī al-Jawāhirī, who once passed by the palace of ʿĀshiq in Samarra. Indeed, this place was the biggest and the most important palace of Mutawakkil because he had spent a lot of money on it. However, it has been dilapidated by the passage of time and nothing remains of it except ruins. Al-Jawāhirī has

1– Name of a town in Iraq.
2– Name of a river.
3– A place in Yemen.

described it in the following poem:

> The Palace of ʿĀshiq[1] is deserted and its pillars have been demolished, just like a lover desolated by the loss of his beloved. I inquired of the time of its design, of its surfaces, of its breadth, and of its height. I was answered by Time that here is it these ruins and its perimeter used to extend the empty wastelands that are the drain if its aftermath. Be aware that when its star fell from the sky, it was trampled by the hooves of Time.[2]

This is how the palaces of tyrants come to an end and nothing is left of them in the society and nothing will remain eternally except the truth. This is why the Imams from the Household of the holy Prophet (ʿa) are eternal, because they are the callers towards societal truth in the Islamic world.

The Eternity of the Soul

The soul is an essence for which non-existence and annihilation does not occur. It is the body and form of the human being that is destroyed.

Al-Maʿarri the wise has said:

> Human beings were created for immortality but people deem they will be annihilated; rather, they are transferred from the world of action and deed to the world hereafter where they will attain punishment or blessings.

Avicenna has described the descent of the soul, its dwelling in the body and its separation from the body after death when it will see what the eye cannot envisage in the world. He has said:

> It descended on you from a high and elevated place that is fortified and protected. It is covered from the eyes; eyes that travel without veil. It has reached you in aversion but probably also hates separating from you

1– The word ʿÀshiq also means lover in Arabic.
2– *Dīwān al-Jawāhirī*, vol. 2, p. 38.

> though it was afflicted. It disdains and does not become a constant companion of the world, but when death comes its resting place is a wasteland. I think it forgot the covenant of the sanctuary and is not satisfied with leaving the status.

And also:

> Until when the journey is close to the sanctuary and the migration closes on the boundless territory. The journey is determined and indeed the cover is removed. Then the soul envisages what cannot be envisaged with the slumbering eye. It separates, leaving everything behind except the companionship of dust.

The veil before human beings shall quickly open after death and they will discern with acuteness, just as is said in the Glorious Qur'ān:

فَكَشَفْنَا عَنكَ غِطَاءكَ فَبَصَرُكَ الْيَوْمَ حَدِيدٌ

We have removed your veil from you, and so your sight is acute today.[1]

This means the eyes will become able to see, such that persons can envisage all the acts they have performed in the world and will attain just remuneration.

Wills

It has been emphasized to make a will if a person feels close to the end of life. A will has parts that are compulsory and parts that are recommended. The compulsory aspect of a will regards payment of debts and other Islamic obligations like khums and zakāt that have not been paid during the person's lifetime. The recommended aspect of a will includes making bequests to help the poor after one's death or any other type of good deed such as visiting the shrines of the pure Imams (ʿa) on behalf of the

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1– *Surah Qāf* 50:22.

deceased.

Repentance

It is recommended to repent to Almighty Allah for sins committed while on one's sickbed. It has been reported that the holy Prophet (ṣ) said: "Whoever repents a year before his death, Allah will forgive him." He then said: "Indeed a year is too much, whoever repents a month before his death, Allah will forgive him." Then he said: "Indeed a month is too much, whoever repents a day before his death, Allah will forgive him." He then said: "Indeed a day is too much, whoever repents an hour before his death, Allah will forgive him." Next he said: "An hour is too much, whoever repents (pointing at his neck) when his soul has reached his throat, Allah will forgive him."[1]

Contentment and Tranquility

It is recommended for the believer to greet death with contentment and tranquility. He should not fear when it calls upon him because it is an inevitable, inescapable phenomenon for everyone.

Take a look at the leader of the monotheists, the Commander of the Faithful (ʿa) when he feels the sharpness of the sword of the criminal Abdul-Rahmān ibn Muljam when it severs his head. The honorable Imam raised his voice in prayer in the house of Allah and said:

I am successful, by the Lord of the Kaʿbah.

Indeed, he is successful having the pleasure and contentment of Allah the Most High. In addition, he is successful in his meeting with Almighty Allah because he has considered separation from this life as great success due to the abundance of his good deeds.

Also, take a look at the leader of the youths of paradise, Imam al-Ḥusain (ʿa), when the criminal, the infidel, Shimir bn Zi al-

1– *Wasāʾil ash-Shīʿah* vol. 2 p. 461.

Jaushan put his knees on his chest cutting his honourable neck while the holy Imam was smiling. Shimir said to him: You are smiling while I am cutting your neck?!

The Leader of the Free replied to him: "I am going to meet Allah and my grandfather, the Messenger of Allah (ṣ). Why should I not be happy in such a situation?"

That is the case of secure and tranquil souls, who meet death with a smile before meeting Almighty Allah. However, as for the souls that are perverted and stray from the fundamental path, death is disastrous for them. It has been reported that some kings feel regret when the time of their death comes, saying: "How I wish to be far away. How I wish I had never been created!" Why all this fear of death if the dying person did good work and feared the Lord.

Facing one who is in the Throes of Death in the Direction of Qiblah

In Islam, respect is accorded upon Muslims on the deathbed by turning the person to face towards the Qiblah.

Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) has said:

> If a person dies among you, their face should be turned in the direction of the Qiblah.[1]

Imam ʿAli, the Commander of the Faithful (ʿa) has said:

> The holy Prophet (ṣ) entered the home of a man among the children of Abdul-Muṭalib who was close to death but was not facing in the direction of the Qiblah. He (ṣ) said: turn him to the direction of the Qiblah, because by doing so the angels will face him and likewise Allah the Great and the Most Exalted will face him.[2]

Indeed, it is upon the near relations when a Muslim is at the

1– *Ibid*, p. 452.
2– *Ibid*, p. 453.

throes of death to turn his face to the direction of the most holy among Allah's house. What greater reception and honour is there than this?

Bearing Witness to the Two Testimonies (Shahādatayn)

It is recommended to dictate the two testimonies *(Shahādatayn)* to a person who is near death. It was reported by Ḥalabī that Abū Abdullāh, Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa), said:

> If you are present when a person is approaching death, recite the two testimonies to him as follows: I bear witness that there is no god except Allah. He is one without any associate, and Muḥammad is His servant and Messenger.[1]

The last moment of a person's life should end with the two testimonies, which are more exalted and supreme than all that is in this world. It is also emphasized that the testimonies are a fortification and honour for a Muslim. It is recommended, in addition, to recite some chapters of the holy Qur'ān at the person's deathbed, and Surah al-Ṣāffat and Surah Yāsīn have been mentioned in this respect.[2]

His Preparation

When a Muslim dies, the following ceremonies are carried out on his behalf:

Bathing

A dead person is bathed three times after removing all the dirt from his body as follows:

a- The first: with sidr water

b- The second: with camphor water

c- The third: with pure water

The essence of and how to do these baths with these three

1– *Ibid*, p. 454.
2– *Ibid*, p. 465.

waters are mentioned in detail in the books on the practical laws of Islam.

Shrouding the Corpse

It is compulsory to shroud a dead person with three clothes, they are:

a- Waist cloth: covers the navel to the knees

b- Cloak: covers from the shoulder down to half of the shank (i.e. between the knee and the ankle)

c- Full shroud: covers the entire body

In their books, jurists describe the conditions for shrouding and purification.

Escorting the Corpse

Islam has recommended escorting a dead person and carrying the body on the shoulder to take it to its last resting place. Indeed, numerous hadīths have been reported regarding the reward for those that partake in funeral processions. In this respect Isḥaq ibn Ammar has reported that Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) has said:

> The first gift of a believer in the grave is the absolution of those who accompany his corpse.[1]

Imam Abū Jaʿfar (ʿa) has said:

> Four intercessions will be given on the Day of Resurrection to one who accompanies a corpse.[2]

Many such hadīths have recommended escorting the corpse of a Muslim as a show of honor and respect to the deceased.

Prayer of the Corpse

It is compulsory to observe prayer upon the corpse, whether male or female, a just believer or an immoral person or

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1– *Ibid*, p. 143.
2– *Ibid*, p. p. 141.

otherwise. This is a *sufficient necessity* upon all Muslims. In other words, if some come forward to carry out the obligation, others are then excluded from the obligation. The method of this prayer is as follows:

Recitation of "Allahu Akbar" and the two testimonies *(Shahādatain)*.

Recitation of "Allahu Akbar" and sending blessings upon the holy Prophet (ṣ).

Recitation of "Allahu Akbar" and supplication for the believers

Recitation of "Allahu Akbar" and supplication for the corpse

Recitation of "Allahu Akbar" and concluding the prayer.

Ablution is not a condition for this prayer. Likewise, purification of the body is not obligatory. This prayer is a type of supplication and has rules as mentioned in books of jurisprudence.

Burying

It is compulsory to bury a Muslim under the earth to a depth where it is secure from predatory animals and its odor does not escape. It is also compulsory for the corpse to face the direction of the holy Qiblah and for others to seek forgiveness and blessing upon the deceased. His next of kin should dictate the two testimonies *(Shahādatain)* for the deceased after the departure of those that have escorted the corpse.

In this way, a human's time in this world is concluded: with shroud and a ditch. Indeed, from Almighty Allah we come and unto Him we shall return.

It is recommended to observe prayer for the deceased the night of the burial and to recite some chapters of the holy Qur'ān for his or her soul.

We have come to the end of our discussion concerning Islam's accompaniment of human beings in all stages of life. It is

emphasized that no religion among the heavenly religions has showed interest in human beings like the interest showed to human beings by Islam.